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THE SUDAN

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THE SUDAN

By

SIR HAROLD MACMICHAEL

G.C.M.G. D.S.O.

LONDON

ERNEST BENN LIMITED

First Published 1954

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Published by Ernest Benn Ltd
Bouverie House · Fleet Street · London · EC4
Printed in Great Britain

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Preface

MY retirement from the Sudan twenty years ago left me out of personal touch at first hand with all that has happened since then, and in preparing this book I have perforce relied for my facts upon what has been written in books, periodicals and newspapers, and upon the help of friends who are still serving the Sudan Government in one capacity or another. In the former category I would make special mention of certain recent publications without which the difficulties of my task would have been quadrupled. Mr. Mekki Abbas's *The Sudan Question*, Mr. O. G. S. Crawford's *The Fung Kingdom of Sennar*, Mr. J. S. R. Duncan's *The Sudan, A Record of Achievement*, Mr. H. E. Hurst's *The Nile*, and Dr. M. Shibeika's *British Policy in the Sudan, 1882–1902*, have all provided valuable data. My debt is also great to the Royal Institute of International Affairs for the use of numerous periodic Surveys and Information Papers, etc., which have been of the greatest help to me, and to the Sudan Government for supplying me with many reports, handbooks and brochures.

In preparing Chapters 4, 5 and 6, I have been particularly indebted also to Lord Cromer's *Modern Egypt*, and Mr. A. L. Kennedy's *Salisbury 1830–1903*.

The personal friends who have given me ungrudging assistance in providing facts and comment are many, and among them I would especially express my gratitude to Messrs. R. C. Mayall and W. H. T. Luce for checking the facts in the 'political' chapters (14 to 16), to Mr. A. J. Arkell for providing material for the ancient history of the Sudan and to Mr. W. N. Allan for assistance in the matter of irrigation.

I would, at the same time, make it clear that the opinions expressed in this book and the inferences drawn from the facts supplied are entirely my own.

H. A. M.

Bibliographical Note

NO attempt has been made to provide a bibliography of the Sudan or of the numerous works consulted in preparing this book. The titles of some of the latter are quoted in full in the footnotes; others, to which there is more frequent reference, appear in abbreviated form as below.

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Introduction

TO the world in general 'the Sudan' has in the past meant little more than what the name literally connotes, the country of 'the Blacks'. There have been occasions when the limelight has flashed briefly upon it, but to all but the few who have been called upon to deal directly with its problems, whether in England or Egypt or the Sudan itself, it has figured as a remote and uninviting area lying somewhere south of the Egyptian border. Apart from the fleeting lustre shed by a few great names and gallant deeds, its affairs, past, present and future, have claimed little attention from the man in the street. Neither its magnitude nor the scope of what may be its eventual rôle in the political and economic life of Africa and the Middle East has been appreciated by him or by his elected representatives.

But the very extent of the Sudan gives warrant for a recasting of ideas. A country of a million square miles, stretching from Egypt to East Africa and the Congo, from the Red Sea and Abyssinia to French Equatorial Africa, could never in the nature of things be negligible; and two factors have given it an importance which is now being realised more widely. The first of these is that a river endued with more powers of life and death to mankind than any other runs through it for two and a half thousand miles; the second is that its people—some eight and three-quarter million now—having passed through half a century of preparation, are about to receive their full independence and constitute themselves, for better or worse, a parliamentary democracy.

The chapters that follow touch upon these factors, and it need only be said here that great issues depend upon both in the future. It would hardly be an over-simplification to say that the problems of the future will resolve themselves into two, the control of the Nile and the self-control of those who populate its valley.

Part I attempts to give a bird's-eye view of the country and its people, some account of events up to the reconquest of 1898, and a brief statement of the position which faced the

new administration and the methods adopted to deal with it in the first instance.

Part II opens with a purely narrative account, in Chapter 8, of the pacification of the country up to the present day, including its rôle in both World Wars. Thereafter Chapters 9 to 13 discuss in turn each of the main fields, administrative, social and economic, in which development has taken place during the half-century of British rule, and may serve to illustrate the manner in which a great trusteeship has been fulfilled.

The political relationships between Great Britain, Egypt and the Sudan, figure from time to time in these five chapters, but the subject is dealt with more fully, as a whole, in Part III, which carries the story up to the signature of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of February, 1953.

PART ONE

BACKGROUND AND FOUNDATIONS

Chapter 1

The Country and Its People

A BIRD'S-EYE view of the Sudan would show it as a hilly rather than a mountainous country, though its central and southern provinces are fringed by mountains: the Abyssinian highlands to the east, the massif of Gebel Marra to the west, and the tumbled ranges of Central Africa, the Great Lakes and the Rift Valley, to the south. The physical characteristics of the intervening plains are derived in part from climate and direct rainfall and, in the upper basins of the Nile, from the rainfall of the mountainous lands beyond, which discharge their torrents northwards and north-westwards into the valleys and swamps of the lowlands.

The most northerly areas of the Sudan, inland from the river valley on either side, belong geographically speaking to the broad, semi-desert tract which includes Arabia and the southern Sahara. The rainfall here is almost *nil* in the extreme north and only about one inch at Merowe in Dongola. At Khartoum and Port Sudan it averages six to seven inches, at El Obeid to the west and Kassala to the east twelve to fourteen inches, at Wad Medani nearly sixteen inches. As one moves southwards the increase is even more rapid: at Singa on the Blue Nile the figure is nearly twenty-two inches, at Malakal on the White Nile thirty-four to thirty-five, at Juba nearly thirty-six, at Wau in the Bahr el Ghazal forty-three and a half—with more as the Nile–Congo divide and the region of the Lakes are approached. Thus, in the north the rains are limited to a few days in the year, while to the south the rainy season lengthens—from June or July to September at Khartoum and in central Kordofan; from April to October in southern Kordofan, and from about February to November in the valley of the upper Nile and the country on either side of it.

The vegetation of the country naturally varies with the rainfall and the deposits of detritus resulting from it. In the far north, on either side of the old provinces of Dongola

and Berber, where the only cultivable land is that which can be reached by pumping or flooding along the banks of the river, here fringed with date-palms, there is a stony, sandy waste with sparse scrub providing precarious pasture for short periods. Farther south, on the latitude of the Gezira plain, which lies in the angle formed by the White and Blue Niles, the country broadens out into sandy, undulating steppes with outcrops of tumbled hills, well wooded, with ample space for the cultivation of corn and the pasturage of camels, sheep, cattle and goats. Here the water supply in the dry season is drawn from wells, but in parts of western Kordofan, where they are few and far between, the rain-water is stored in the hollowed-out trunks of the baobab tree. Beyond this belt again a great change is noticeable: to east and west of the valley dark, heavy clay replaces sand, bush becomes thicker, grass higher, the ground more broken, the hills and rocky outcrops larger and more frequent. Cattle take the place of camels and sheep. To this zone belong the Nuba Mountains of Kordofan, and it is flanked on the west by the high, volcanic pile of Gebel Marra, which forms the watershed between the systems of the Nile and Chad.

Then, as the maze of streams which flow into the Nile from the highlands converge in the neighbourhood of Lake No, the great swamps of the *sudd* area begin. These are in part permanent, in part temporary. The permanent swamp along the Bahr el Gebel covers more than 3,000 square miles; that in the basin of the Bahr el Ghazal and its tributaries between 5,000 and 6,000; that of the Machar marsh, to the north of Baro–Pibor junction, maybe 2,500. During the rains, and until October or November, all the low-lying country between the Abyssinian foothills and the Congo divide is under water, but as the rains cease much land which had been uninhabitable dries up and provides grazing for the cattle of the Nilotic tribes. It is easy to conceive the vast losses by evaporation and transpiration of water which might be usefully employed. It has, in fact, been computed that about half the water which passes Mongalla is so lost, and with wastage at its present figure only ten per cent of the total Nile flood in Egypt is contributed by the White Nile.

In addition, the *sudd*, when uncontrolled, entirely blocks the navigation of the river for months or years. The description given in 1870 by Sir Samuel Baker is much the same as

that recorded by Seneca in the report of the Roman centurions sent by Nero nearly 2,000 years before to explore the sources of the Nile: it can hardly be bettered.

> 'The immense number of floating islands [he writes] that were constantly passing down the stream of the White Nile had no exit; thus they were sucked under the original obstruction by the force of the stream, which passed through some mysterious channel, until the subterranean passage became choked with a wondrous accumulation of vegetable matter. The entire river became a marsh, through which, by the great pressure of water, the stream oozed through innumerable small channels. In fact, the White Nile had disappeared.'

The work of clearance, tackled only fitfully during the latter years of the Egyptian régime, was one of the first tasks undertaken when the country was reoccupied in 1898 and continues incessantly. As will be seen, it is the permanent clearance of the river channel in this region and the conservation of the waters that constitute perhaps the greatest problem of the future both for Egypt and the Sudan.

Beyond the *sudd* conditions become more tropical, with great belts of forest and a multiplicity of streams flowing from the highlands of the south into the lowlands. To the west, beyond the scarp that flanks the upper waters of the Bahr el Gebel, the country is a plateau diversified with 'inselbergs' and containing a wide stretch of lateritic ironstone; to the east the mountain ranges are more massive, with the Imatong mountains rising to 10,456 feet.

In a later chapter an attempt will be made to assess the part which is played by the Nile itself, considered in isolation, in the destinies of Egypt and the Sudan, and by the great engineering works which are in preparation for the development of its powers and their control.

So much for the country. Its inhabitants are as diversified as its geography. Their total numbers in 1951 were estimated at 8,766,228; 8,430,818 were Sudanese, and of these 2,254,593 lived in the three southern provinces.*

* The most numerous non-Sudanese were western immigrants (299,546). Egyptians numbered 13,684; Europeans and Americans 7,801; Indians 1,354, and others 13,025.

As a broad generalisation it would be fair to speak of them as predominantly Arab and entirely Islamic in the north, and predominantly negroid and pagan in the south, but there are so many exceptions and qualifications to be made that the description would have only a partial value. For instance, to take the northern sector, among the nomadic camel-owning Arabs of northern Kordofan, most of whose forebears entered the country between the tenth and the sixteenth centuries, there are more ancient negroid settlements in the hills of Kaga; in northern Darfur there are Arab tribes interspersed with old negroid communities, mostly Fur, but in some cases of more westernly origin; in the Red Sea hills the Hadendoa, Bisharin and Beni Amer have little Arab blood in their veins and speak a language of their own; along the river-banks in Dongola are the ancient Nubian elements, partly Arab, as a result of the infiltrations and settlements of the centuries that followed the Arab conquest of Egypt, and partly cognate to the people of Upper Egypt. In the central sector comprising Darfur, Kordofan, the erstwhile provinces of the White and Blue Niles, Kassala and half of Dar Fung, the inhabitants are semi-nomadic, with large herds of camels, sheep and cattle, but with numerous settled villages and small towns, subsisting on cultivation and trade and the picking of gum from the acacia forests. On the same latitude live the thousands of settled folk who cultivate the rich cotton crops of the Gezira and the delta of the Gash—a muddy torrent which for a few months flows into the plain near Kassala from Eritrea—and among them are large settlements of Hausa and Fellata from West Africa.

Farther south again, in the wetter districts unsuited for camels and sheep, are the warlike cattle-owning Baggara Arabs, moving camp from north to south according to the season of the year across all southern Darfur, southern Kordofan and the adjacent areas of the White Nile. These in the west overlap the Nilotic tribes, from whom in old days they raided slaves, and the Nuba mountains, which are still peopled by an aboriginal pagan stock. To the east of the river are a series of primitive negroid tribes—Fung, Hamag, Berta, Ingassana, Burun and others—of whose origin little is known.

In the southern Sudan proper—that is to say in the country of the marshes beyond Malakal and the Bahr el Gebel—

there are three main groups of negro tribes speaking many different languages: first, the long-shanked Nilotic folk, Shilluk, Dinka, Nuer and Anuak, whose whole life is wrapped up in their cattle; second, the Nilo-Hamites, cultivators and herdsmen, comprising Bari, Didinga, Turkana, etc., who live in the hills forming the edge of the Lake plateau; third, the Azande in the forest country of the Bahr el Ghazal. These last, a branch of the main tribe in the Belgian Congo, invaded the country so recently as the nineteenth century and are very distinct in their characteristics: a quick-witted, musical brown folk of medium stature, with no cattle, cultivators, hunters, craftsmen and enterprising travellers.

What has been written above is admittedly sketchy and incomplete, but it may serve to give some idea of the vastness and complexity of the Sudan and the heterogeneity of its population. It is true that the line of division, geographical, ethnical and cultural, between the predominantly Arab north and the purely negroid south is well marked and obvious, and still, as we shall see, potent as a political factor. On the other hand, the ingrained Arab habit of raiding the south for slaves, in part for export to Egypt and Arabia, and in even greater part for domestic purposes, has existed for centuries and reached its peak in the nineteenth century under Egyptian and Dervish auspices. This has led to widespread racial miscegnation, with the result, illustrated by complexions and features, that few, if any, 'Arab' families can claim to have no admixture of the black in their composition. The causes which have led to this merger are by no means forgotten or forgiven by the southerners, and the fear of their recrudescence when British control is removed is not dead; but the very fact that the merger has taken place on so wide a scale provides at least some warrant, additional to that derived from economic and administrative considerations, for the claim that the whole country must now be considered as a single indivisible whole.

Another point that will not have escaped notice as the general picture is studied is that, whatever may be the case in the towns and larger villages of the northern and central districts, where a highly educated, intelligent and progressive element has come into being, the vast majority of the Sudanese are concerned only with their flocks and herds, their yearly crops, and the facilities available for the aggrieved to

obtain redress. The matters which excite the interest and aspirations of the few who represent them in the distant capital are utterly unreal to these simple souls, and incomprehensible save in so far as they can be interpreted in terms of that familiar and universal topic, the struggle of rival personalities for power.

Chapter 2

Before 1821

LITTLE is known, or can ever be known, about the early history of the whole of the wide tracts that now constitute the Sudan, but it appears that the country round what is now Khartoum, some 6,000 or 7,000 years ago was peopled by negroes who lived by hunting, spearing fish and gathering wild fruits. These early negroes had learned to make good pottery, decorated to look like baskets. Their successors, the Khartoum neolithic people, made pottery related to this, but more varied and clearly ancestral to that of other negroes who, about 5,000 years ago, were burying their dead in the deserted mounds where the neolithic people had lived. The pottery of these folk, again, was ancestral to that of the 'brown race' who were living at the same time in the Halfa area and who were conquered by the third pharaoh of the first Egyptian Dynasty about 3000 B.C. The *fellahin* of Egypt, the Beja of the eastern Sudan, the Abyssinians and the Somalis all belong to this 'brown race', as also did the cattle-owning people who were living between the first and second cataracts about 2300–1750 B.C. and making pottery similar to that made long before in the Khartoum area; so it seems clear that, whatever the extent of racial admixture in these ancient days, the people of the northern and central Sudan at least shared a common culture.

About 2000 B.C. the pharaohs of the twelfth Egyptian dynasty made and fortified their frontier at Semna, fifty miles south of Halfa, and traded with the princes of Kush and their subjects at Kerma on the Dongola reach. Their forts were destroyed by fire in the tumultuous period when the Egyptians of Thebes, aided by Sudanese mercenaries, were engaged in expelling the Asiatic Hyksos from Egypt (*c.* 1600 B.C.). The eighteenth dynasty, after extending their empire as far as the Euphrates, turned their attention southwards and reoccupied the northern Sudan, and Thuthmosis I (1530–1520 B.C.) fixed the frontier at Kurgus, about fifty miles south of

Abu Hamed. Under the régime that followed, the northern Sudan, including the Dongola reach, became largely Egyptianised; temples were built in all the small towns that sprang up, and some of the local Sudanese obtained official employment under the Egyptians. It was at this period that Gebel Barkal, near the fourth cataract, became an important religious centre, where a body of priests, exiled from Thebes during the break-up of the New Empire, took refuge.

Their advance south of the fourth cataract had brought the Egyptians for the first time into close contact with the negroes of the central Sudan, and the absence of any settlements dating from this era south of Shendi suggests that slave-raids, perhaps as far afield as Malakal and Sennar, were of frequent occurrence. These probably did not penetrate far from the banks of the river, and a barter trade in gold, gum, oils, ebony, ivory and monkeys was maintained with the tribes of the hinterland and led to some degree of culture contact. What conditions may have obtained farther afield, what migrations and upheavals took place, what was the way of life—or death—during these millennia can only be the subject of guesswork.

Under the New Empire control of the northern Sudan was vested in the viceroy of Kush, and as that empire broke up, the viceroy with his Sudanese troops became increasingly important, until in 1085 B.C. the viceroy Herihor became pharaoh and made his own son viceroy.

After a dark age of three centuries or so there arose on the Dongola reach a dynasty of kings whose origin is uncertain, but who may have been the lineal descendants of the princes of Kush and have been instigated by the priesthood of Amon-Ra at Barkal to conquer Egypt and re-establish there respect for the ancient religion. Whoever they were, it is certain that they were Egyptianised and under the influence of the priests of Barkal. In the middle of the eighth century Kashta, the ruler of this kingdom, was powerful enough to over-run and subdue Upper Egypt as far as Thebes. His successor, with the Egyptian name of Piankhi, conquered the rest of Eygpt and founded the twenty-fifth dynasty. It was he who made additions to the great temple of Amon at Barkal, and nearby sprang up his capital with the name of Napata. Here the kings of the dynasty were buried in pyramids according to the ancient rites of Egypt, to which a return was now made in Egypt itself under their influence. At the same time a large

secondary centre grew up farther south, at Meroe, above the junction of the Atbara with the Nile.

Shabaka (707–697 B.C.), who followed Piankhi, organised the administration of Egypt and transferred his capital to Thebes; he also sent an army to aid Hezekiah in Palestine against the Assyrian Sennacherib. Taharka (688–663 B.C.) was defeated in the Delta by the Assyrians in 671 B.C. and eventually driven out of Egypt. A similar fate befell his successor, Tanutamon, the last of the dynasty, who had made an expedition to Egypt on his accession in 663 B.C.

The rulers of Kush continued to style themselves 'Kings of Upper and Lower Egypt', but they had now lost all control of Egypt, and the later dynasts of that country, by stationing Greek mercenaries in Lower Nubia, armed with iron weapons, of which the people of Kush had had their first experience at the hands of the Assyrians, ensured that they should not regain it. Meroe, situated in more fertile surroundings and able to produce rich corn crops, iron ore and the wood fuel necessary for smelting it, now increased in importance, and by the sixth century it had become the capital of a prosperous state, though Napata remained for long the religious centre.

The dynasty of the kings of Kush ruled Meroe for about 1,000 years after the expulsion of Tanutamon from Egypt, and the pattern of its civilisation and religion remained predominantly Egyptian. On the other hand, as the influence, first of Greece and then of Rome, became paramount on the Mediterranean, and Egypt became a centre of hellenistic culture, and trade expanded along the Red Sea and the Nile, these influences made themselves felt even at distant Meroe.

It is from the Greek and Roman geographers, historians and savants, who studied at the great university of Alexandria, that the world first learned something about the interior of the Sudan. Even before their day Herodotus had visited Aswan, in 460 B.C., and gleaned tales of what lay to the south, of Meroe and the sources of the Nile; two centuries later Eratosthenes, who was in charge of the library at Alexandria, wrote a geography, most of which has been lost, and he was the first to record the Blue and the White Niles as flowing from great lakes lying far to the south. Strabo, to whom we owe such fragments of Eratosthenes's work as survive, himself visited Aswan at the beginning of the Christian era and wrote a monumental treatise of geography, and the elder

Pliny (A.D. 23–79) compiled an equally monumental *Historia Naturalis*.* But it is to Claudius Ptolemaeus, who studied at Alexandria in the first half of the second century, that the greatest debt was due by the world for its knowledge of the geography of Africa before the circumnavigations of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the penetration of the interior by the great explorers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He recorded the 'Mountains of the Moon' as the sources of the White Nile, and the Abyssinian sources of the Blue Nile and the Atbara. His data and theories formed the basis for all mediæval maps, European and Arabian, and it is indeed remarkable that for so long as the cartographers relied on 'Ptolemy' their work was, generally speaking, more accurate than when, dismissing him as 'unscientific', they attempted to draw their maps in the light of their own less reliable information.

Soon after the Roman conquest of Egypt, towards the close of the first century before Christ, the Kushites were rash enough to raid Aswan. Swift retribution followed, and the prefect Petronius in 23 B.C. arrived at Napata with an army and destroyed it. He then retired to Egypt, after fixing the boundary at Kasr Ibrim. Thereafter there was a short period of great building activity in Kush, including repairs to the great temple at Napata and the erection of the three temples at Naga to the east of Shendi. At much the same time, too, numerous artificial reservoirs (*hafirs*) for rain-water were constructed in the 'Island of Meroe' (the area lying in the triangle formed by the Atbara and the Blue Nile), for water supply had then, as at present, become a problem as a result of the increase of herds, the gradual encroachments of the desert and erosion of the soil.

But the Meroitic Kingdom was now rapidly degenerating, and its rulers seem to have exercised little authority over the

* It is a curious fact that to Pliny's description of the 'Ethiopians' we owe one of the 'King's Beasts' of our own royal house, the 'Yale': he recorded from travellers' tales the habit of the Nilotic tribes—still practised by the Dinka—of training the horns of their cattle fore and aft, and passed on the story to the mediaeval geographers and so to the writers of bestiaries from whose illustrations the house of Beaufort adopted the strange beast and left it on record over the gateways of two Cambridge colleges, on the Royal Chapel at Windsor, and at Hampton Court. See *The Hunting of the Yale* by the late Sir Arthur Shipley in *Country Life*, 23 March, 1912, and his letter in *The Times* of 15 June, 1926, referring to earlier correspondence in April and May, 1911.

numerous petty kinglets who established themselves in one part or another of its domains. Final disaster came upon it—and it is possible that Meroe itself may have already ceased to exist—when a King of Axum, about A.D. 350, or earlier, descended from the highlands of Abyssinia by way of the Atbara and swept over the riverain districts. Since no more is heard of the Axumites, it would seem that they withdrew after their incursion. The Meroitic royal family, for their part, may have moved westwards, and it is possible that it was they or their descendants who founded the kingdoms which arose between Darfur and the Lake Chad area. Such a move would have been a natural one, for communications along the latitudes between the deserts of the north and the forest country of the south have always been comparatively easy, and copies of sixth-century Byzantine lamps, such as were used in the Kingdom of the Nobatae, which had emerged in the northern Sudan after the fall of Meroe, have been found as far afield as the Gold Coast.

These Nobatae were introduced into Upper Egypt (Lower Nubia) by Diocletian to assist in the prevention of raids by the Blemmyes (Beja) of the eastern desert, but it appears that not infrequently they acted in concert with the marauders. In the sixth century Justinian bethought himself of converting them to Christianity, and a contributory motive was, no doubt, that of checking their warlike propensities. We are told by Barhebraeus * that a priest named Julianus of the orthodox monophysite persuasion, 'inflamed by pious zeal towards the Nubians living on the borders of the southern Thebaïd, began to meditate whether by any means he might lead them to the Christian faith, for they were heathen and grievously vexed the Roman territory'. He was supported by Theodora, the empress of Justinian, who shared his tenets and went so far as to threaten the Roman governor of the Thebaïd with death if her nominee failed to forestall the orthodox mission which her lord and master was himself dispatching to Nubia. In the result Julianus was successful, and by the end of the sixth century the Nile valley from Aswan southwards to the borders of Abyssinia had been converted, as Abyssinia had been 200 years before. Churches were built from Upper Egypt to the Blue Nile, and Christianity, with bishops owing allegiance to the patriarch of Alexandria,

* *q.v.* Macmichael, *A History of the Arabs in the Sudan* (1922), I, p. 26.

remained established as the official religion until its dispossession by Islam.

It was in A.D. 630 that an event occurred which was to have a profound effect on the future of the Sudan. The armies of Islam, surging northwards with all the fervour and drive of a new religion, conquered Syria and Egypt. Not content with this and the prospect of also over-running the northern coasts of Africa, their leader, 'Amr ibn el 'Asi, dispatched a force of 20,000 men under 'Abdulla ibn Sa'ad in 641 to invade Nubia. These penetrated no great distance, but two years later 'Abdulla, now Governor of Upper Egypt, renewed the attempt, reached Dongola and destroyed its church. He then concluded a peace with the Nubians on the basis of an annual exchange of commodities. The settlement was obviously one which suited both parties, for the principle remained in force for about six centuries and seems to have been applied also at a later stage to relations between the Arabs and the Beja tribes of the eastern desert. It need hardly be added that the peace was not always kept: raids and counter-raids were periodic, retribution was exacted or obstructed, but as a rule a degree of comparative amicability was in the end restored.

The Arabs did not keep control of Egypt for the whole of this long period. About the middle of the ninth century the Mamelukes seized power, and the effect was that many of their Arab subjects, discontented with the new order, moved southwards into the hinterland of the Sudan on either side of the river. On the northernmost reaches of the river they gained a moral and cultural ascendancy, intermarried with the local population, acquired lands, and in general prepared the way for their own eventual control.

Arab travellers and historians who visited what is now the northern Sudan in the tenth century found it divided into two main districts. In the north was Mukurra, with Dongola as its capital and Kabushia its southern limit; in the south was 'Aloa, with its capital at Soba on the Blue Nile but subject to Dongola. Mohammedan influence, they found, was gaining ground in the north but remained negligible in the south. About A.D. 1200 Abu Salih the Armenian records seven bishoprics in Mukurra and, with less probability, some 400 churches in 'Aloa.

Sixty years later the great Mameluke Beybars, who had

usurped power in Egypt and founded an empire covering the whole of the Middle East, found time among all his major activities to lay waste the petty Nubian kingdoms, now in process of disintegration, and his successors followed suit. By now, however, the Arabs infiltrating across the Red Sea or through Egypt were increasing rapidly in numbers. Some pushed up the Nile and settled there, but the majority—those with herds that needed pasture—made for the wider spaces so much resembling those of their ancient homelands. Some pushed eastwards to the Beja country, some south-eastwards up the Atbara to the good grazing of the Wadi Hawad and the Butana, some westwards to the great plains of Kordofan, and the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries laid the foundations of their ultimate destiny in the northern and central zones of the Sudan. Christianity for all practical purposes gave way to Islam, Arabic became the *lingua franca*, and the petty rulers of the country became mere puppets. In some cases, as contemporary Arab historians record, the Nubian system of matrilinear descent facilitated the process.

> 'The Kings of the Nuba [says Ibn Khaldun] attempted to repulse them but they failed. They then won them over by giving them their daughters in marriage. Thus was their kingdom disintegrated, and it passed to certain of the Beni Guhayna on account of their mothers, according to the custom of the infidels as to the succession of the sister or the sister's son. So their kingdom fell to pieces and the Arabs of Guhayna took possession of it.' *

On the southern fringes of their sphere of control the ancient practice of raiding the negro tribes for slaves became habitual and that merger of the races which has produced the population of to-day began to take place.

It is upon the latter years of this period that the earliest written records of Sudanese origin throw some fitful gleams of light. In A.D. 1504, we learn, a Fung Sultan, 'Amara Dunkas, founded a kingdom at Sennar on the Blue Nile and established amicable relations with the Arabs who had occupied the grazing lands round the junction of the rivers. The Fung, pagans by origin, had been moslemised, and a basis for co-operation lay in the desire of both parties to eradicate the Christian kingdom of Soba and appropriate its resources. For

* See Macmichael, *loc. cit.*, I, pp. 138–9.

the rest, the Arabs, not strong enough to contest the domination of the Fung, needed, above all, pasture and cultivation rights; the Fung, bent on consolidating their power, were ready enough to take toll of the Arabs in return for concessions given and such help as could be offered.

Who these Fung were is not certain and has been the subject of much debate. All that can be said with reasonable certainty is that they were not of northern origin. They may have come from the borders of Abyssinia, or from the direction of the White Nile, or from the hilly country lying between.* The extent of the territories which they controlled at the heyday of their power from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries was considerable. In the north, Dongola and the cataract regions were subject to them, and southwards their rule extended to Fazugli, the Ingassana hills and the Burun country. In the east Abyssinia formed, as ever, an impenetrable barrier, but westwards the Fung were in control up to the White Nile and penetrated at times beyond it to the Nuba mountains. Inland, however, except in the wilder southern districts of heavy rainfall and thick bush, the Arabs were more or less independent, though paying their tribute to Sennar.

News of the emergence of this powerful state, or, as it has aptly been called, federation of principalities,† spread northwards and excited interest. Itinerant scholars and 'holy men' came to preach and teach and to be given grants of riverain land which in many cases their descendants still hold. Paganism rapidly gave way to Islam, except in the remoter fastnesses of the hills. The fame of Sennar and its mushroom civilisation even reached the outer world. It had been visited as early as 1522 by David Reubeni, a Jew who crossed from Jedda to Suakin, but it was not until 1699 that the European Poncet passed through it en route for Abyssinia and left the first description of it which we have.

Far to the west, before the end of the fourteenth century, the Arabs had reached Darfur, and are even found taking part in a civil war in the kingdom of Bornu. The Bornu sphere of influence certainly included parts of Darfur, and it is prob-

* Various theories are discussed at length in *The Fung Kingdom of Sennar* by O. G. S. Crawford (1951), Chapters X and XI. Mr. Arkell thinks that they came from Bornu, in the region of Lake Chad.

† Crawford, *loc. cit.*

able that for a time its ruler Idris Aloma (1571–1603) exercised control over the whole, and that from the break-up following his death dates the beginning of the historic Fur sultanate which had the centre of its power in the great and thickly populated massifs of Gebel Marra and Gebel Si. The natural claim of its royal house to be of Arab extraction may have some partial basis of truth, but it is less convincing than the undeniable evidence of western affiliations. Be this as it may, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Fur dynasty held sway over the whole of Darfur and also over central Kordofan. There, at times, clashes occurred with the Fung, but from about 1761, when the last of the Fung kings to exercise real control died, the Fur held undisputed mastership. Both kingdoms alike fell to the invading 'Turks' in 1821. The Fung confederation had by then dissolved into anarchy and perished in its entirety; the Fur sultanate was merely driven back from the scene of its temporary conquest to its own domains and there survived.

Chapter 3

Modern Egypt Enters the Scene, 1821–82

ON 1 July, 1798, Napoleon invaded Egypt, then nominally under Ottoman rule. Two years later the French were ejected by British and Turkish troops, and, on the withdrawal of the former, Mohammed 'Ali, an Albanian in Turkish employ, seized power, massacred the Mameluke mercenaries who had controlled the country hitherto and obtained from the Porte recognition of his status as 'Pasha of Egypt'. Ruthless and ambitious, he needed slaves for his armies and gold for his exchequer. The Sudan appeared to offer a suitable field for obtaining both and means, at the same time, of satisfying the craving of his turbulent *bashi-bazook* irregulars for loot. Incidental motives were the wish to extirpate a body of Mamelukes who had taken refuge in Dongola and a genuine ambition to learn all that could be known about the sources of the great river upon which his domains depended for their life. He resolved that the whole of the Nile basin should be his.

The Turco-Egyptian forces—a motley crew of irregulars for the most part—were divided into two main bodies, one under his son Isma'il to deal with the Fung, the other under his son-in-law the 'Defterdar' to occupy Kordofan. The state of confusion and disunity into which the Fung confederacy had dissolved and the lack of firearms made Isma'il's task an easy one: the petty kinglets of Dongola submitted, the Sha'igia missed golden opportunities of wreaking havoc among the ill-disciplined rabble of 4,000 marauders who crossed their territories and offered no effective resistance. Korti was sacked, Shendi capitulated, and when Sennar was reached, its puppet king, unsupported by any of the vassals upon whose aid he might have counted, surrendered his capital and kingdom. This was in June, 1821. In the following year, as Isma'il was returning, he was murdered at Shendi by the local populace and a general revolt broke out in the neighbourhood. The Defterdar had, meanwhile, invaded Kordofan

by way of Debba and Haraza and defeated the Fur. The news of Isma'il's fate brought him back in haste, Shendi was put to the sword and the revolt suppressed with savage fury.

After the departure of the Defterdar the Sudan was divided into provinces and districts under Turkish officers. Tribes and village communities were left in charge of native Sudanese, and such duties as the keeping of accounts and clerical work were left for the most part to Coptic employees. In a very short space of time a system of extortion and rapine was organised which can rarely have been equalled. Grinding taxes and fines deprived the wretched populace of such little wealth as it had possessed and, in the south, slave-hunts were inaugurated to obtain the recruits needed for the army or for sale in the markets of Egypt. The traveller Pallme, who resided in Kordofan for the two years 1838–9, shortly after Mohammed 'Ali had himself paid a visit to the Sudan to see what prospects there were of gold in the Beni Shangul area, wrote in these terms:

> 'When a village has nothing left wherewith to pay its taxes it is obliged to find a certain number of slaves, who are drafted as recruits into the various regiments, or publicly sold. . . . The Viceroy of Egypt institutes annually, once or twice in the course of the year, an actual hunt in the mountains of Nuba, and in the bordering countries, and seizes upon a certain number of the negroes by stratagem or force. . . . In the year 1825 . . . the number of slaves which had been led away into captivity was estimated at 40,000; and in the year 1839 the total number amounted to at least 200,000, without reckoning the thousands stolen by the Baggara and bought by the Djelabi (*native merchants*).'

This was written of one province only, but was equally applicable elsewhere.

Khartoum became the official capital in 1830; Kassala was founded in 1834. By the middle of the century the northern provinces had been subjugated and were being intensively exploited; in the south a system had been devised whereby Arab traders could purchase concessions to capture slaves, who were then brought to the markets of the north. So abominable had conditions become that the outside world, which had heard of them from a succession of eye-witnesses,

could not fail to be deeply shocked. One of the witnesses has already been cited, and there were many others; for the Pashas of Egypt, in their anxiety to exploit the whole country to the full, were ready enough to use for the purposes of discovery and exploration the services of any who were in a position to assist. The short-term advantages of this policy no doubt outweighed in their mind any thought of what might be the reactions of the civilised world to the state of affairs disclosed.

Linant, a Belgian employed by the British African Association, had been the first white man since the days of Nero's centurions to follow the Nile beyond Khartoum, but he went no farther than 132 miles. Between 1839 and 1842 three Egyptian expeditions were dispatched up the river under Turkish officers accompanied by French and German scientists, and these penetrated beyond Mongalla. The heroic and ill-fated Miss Tinné, Petherick (a Welsh mining engineer), the Frenchman Lejean and others explored the main stream, the Bahr el Ghazal and other affluents of the Nile, between 1853 and 1865, and later (1869–71) there followed the German Schweinfurth. During the same period Speke and Grant were making their historic journeys from the south in the region of the Great Lakes, returning northwards along the Nile in 1863 and meeting Samuel Baker, who, despite the opposition of slave-traders and Nature, had forced his way southwards past the *sudd* and was to continue his way to Lake Albert and then return by the same route.

All these Europeans left outspoken records of what they saw, and the need for some sort of reform became apparent to the authorities, Sa'id Pasha himself went so far as to travel to the Sudan in 1857 and proclaim the abolition of the slave trade and a reduction of taxation; but, whatever the propaganda value of this gesture in Europe, and however genuine may have been its motive, the effect was *nil* in the Sudan. Baker, writing in 1861, describes a state of misery and ruin under a Governor-General who was 'a rather exaggerated specimen of Turkish authorities in general, combining the worst of oriental failings with the brutality of a wild animal'.

In 1863 Isma'il Pasha succeeded to the Khedivate of Egypt and made a more effective attempt to introduce reforms, develop communications, encourage education, centralise control and reduce the slave-raiding: for the last of these pur-

poses European governors of provinces were employed—since no reliance could be placed on Turkish or Egyptian officials—and what they could do they did; but difficulties of communication, climatic conditions, the general confusion prevailing, the obstructions of corrupt officialdom and the power of the well-organised slave-trading magnates, made their task a hopeless one. In any case no relaxation appears to have been made in the main evil from which the country suffered—the extortionate taxation and lack of justice as between man and man—and edicts from Cairo had no practical effect on the conduct of those in whose hands their application lay. Those Sudanese who were accessible to the arm of authority were mercilessly fleeced: those living in the remoter areas were never brought under any form of authority.

Isma'il had other objectives, which were purely imperialistic. Darfur was nominally incorporated into the Sudan, and a *firman* was obtained from Turkey placing Suakin and Massawa under his jurisdiction. Claims were laid to areas lying even farther south along the Red Sea and to coastal provinces of Abyssinia, but their effect was less to conduce to the power of Egypt than to excite resentment and weaken the structure of government.

In 1869 Sir Samuel Baker was appointed by the Khedive to be Governor-General of the Equatorial Provinces, and set forth early in 1870 with instructions to annex the Nile basin southwards from Gondokoro, to eliminate the slave trade and restore order. The riverain districts of the north he found in a state of ruin and desolation, the south 'leased out to piratical slave-hunters, under the name of traders, by the Khartoum Government'.* He passed the *sudd*, as we have seen, and annexed Gondokoro ('Isma'ilia') in May, 1871. Passing on southwards, he proclaimed Unyoro, on the east of Lake Albert, an Egyptian province in 1872 and established friendly relations with the ruler of Uganda. He returned in 1873 to Cairo. This remarkable man and his exploits are not always remembered as they deserve. As that doyen of irrigation experts, Mr. H. E. Hurst, has lately reminded us, Baker was more than an explorer and man of action: he long ago foresaw 'the tremendous possibilities in the complete control of the Nile'.†

* Baker, *Ismailia*, p. 11. † Hurst, p. 91.

Early in 1874 a more famous figure appears upon the scene. Colonel Charles Gordon succeeded Baker in Equatoria at the age of forty-one. As his right-hand man he brought with him that stout-hearted Italian Romolo Gessi, who had previously served with him in the Crimea, and they set forth for his headquarters at Gondokoro at once with a flotilla of paddle-boats, including the *Bordein*, of which such tragic memories survive from later years. There, after sending on Colonel Chaillé-Long, an American serving on his staff, to Uganda and himself returning to Khartoum to adjust difficulties that had arisen, he settled down to carry out a task which was rendered impossible by three factors—the hostility of savage and suspicious tribes, the unreliability and treachery of employees, and the continuous depletion of his staff by disease and death. Notwithstanding this, Gordon worked incessantly, established posts in the Unyoro territory, sent his latest recruit, Schnitzer, who became better known as 'Emin Pasha', to visit the King of Uganda, and himself reached Lake Kioga. In November, 1876, he took steamer for Khartoum and England and entered in his diary the laconic words, 'I have (D.V.) made up my mind to serve His Highness no longer'. The intention was not carried out, for by February of 1877 he had accepted from the Khedive the appointment of Governor-General of the whole of the Sudan.

In the meanwhile events of some moment were happening both in the west and the east. In the west, Zubeir Rahma, an Arab slave-dealer who had become virtually the ruler of the Bahr el Ghazal with an army of his own, had run foul of the Sultan of Darfur, who also claimed jurisdiction there. The Government of Khartoum sought to resolve the difficulty by themselves sending troops and annexing the area in dispute. Zubeir drove out the motley force and, having explained away this action, proceeded to achieve recognition of his position as Governor of the Bahr el Ghazal. Furthermore, he offered to annex Darfur on behalf of the Khedive: the offer was accepted, and in 1874 Zubeir defeated the local Sultan and occupied the capital, El Fasher. Matters were then complicated by the arrival of the Governor-General with a small force of his own, and though Zubeir was left to subdue the local tribes and was made a Pasha, the governorate of the new province was denied to him. Quarrels followed; Zubeir betook himself to Cairo to lay his complaints;

the Governor-General was also summoned thither—and both were detained.

In the east the Khedive Isma'il was pushing forward his plans for the annexation of outlying portions of Abyssinia and what is now Eritrea. The Swiss Munzinger was commissioned to occupy Keren; Harrar was seized; Zeila and the coastal rights as far as Berbera were 'purchased' from the Sultan of Turkey. Arendrup, a Dane, took Ginda, but his advance upon Adua ended with a crushing defeat at the hands of King John of Abyssinia. Reinforcements were sent from Cairo and suffered the same fate, and finally in 1876 the Egyptian forces were compelled to fall back on Massawa and treat for peace.

Upon his return to the Sudan as Governor-General in 1877, Gordon found trouble awaiting him in every quarter. First he went to Massawa to attempt a settlement with the Abyssinians: this was fruitless. No sooner had he returned to Khartoum and started operations on the Augean stables there than trouble calling for his presence broke out in Darfur between the Sultan and Egyptian officials on the one hand and with Zubeir's son, Suleiman, on the other. The Sultan took refuge in Gebel Marra, Suleiman retreated to the Bahr el Ghazal, and Gordon did what he could to pacify the country and repress the slave trade—which in this year, 1877, had been formally banned by a convention between Great Britain and Egypt. But events on the Abyssinian border compelled him to return almost at once to that quarter, where he found that interference by the Minister of War in Cairo had upset what little he had been able to achieve on his former visit. Simultaneously, in Equatoria local outbreaks compelled the evacuation of Masindi. In the following year, 1878, after a hasty visit to Cairo, Gordon went east again to the Red Sea provinces and Harrar, where the Governor Ra'uf Pasha was found guilty of malpractices and dismissed. By July Suleiman was again in revolt in the Bahr el Ghazal, massacring such Egyptians as he met with and declaring himself an independent ruler. Emin Pasha having been left in charge of the administration of Equatoria, Gessi was dispatched, though it was the season of the rains, to attack Suleiman by way of Rumbek and Wau. He was successful, and Suleiman retired on Darfur. Gessi pursued, met Gordon, who had rushed westwards yet again, at Taweisha, and in July, 1879, brought

Suleiman to bay, forced his surrender and shot him and most of his chief lieutenants. One of these, Rabeh, escaped westwards, carved out a kingdom for himself near Lake Chad and was only brought to book by the French in 1901. Gessi himself returned to his task in the Bahr el Ghazal.

It will be clear that Gordon could find little time for the administrative problems at headquarters nor cope adequately with the chaos that faced him from every direction. Some help was forthcoming from the recruitment of a gallant but heterogeneous band of Europeans—Slatin (an Austrian officer), Lupton (the captain of a Red Sea merchantman), Messedaglia (an Italian) and others—but finally his health gave way and in 1879 and for the second time he resigned and left for Cairo, where the Khedive Isma'il had lately been deposed by the Sultan of Turkey under European pressure and replaced by his son Mohammed Tewfik. Even so Gordon was not to return home in peace at once, for he consented to visit Abyssinia again and attempt a settlement. The result was a failure, and on his return journey he was arrested by the Abyssinians and sent back to Massawa. In January, 1880, he sailed from Egypt for Europe. His successor at Khartoum was that Ra'uf Pasha whom he had dismissed for malpractices two years before.

The position in the Sudan at this stage may be summarised as follows: the Victoria Nile at the north-east end of Lake Albert was the Khedive's southern boundary. Most of what is now Uganda had been abandoned. Emin Pasha was in charge of Equatoria, with his headquarters at Lado near Juba, and Gessi was Governor of the Bahr el Ghazal,* but administration was practically non-existent and the slave-traders held sway. Darfur and Kordofan had never been fully subdued and were in a state of turmoil, Abyssinia was in truculent mood to the east. Penury and desolation, corruption and inefficiency were rampant everywhere.

Such was the setting for the final revolt, and the sole reason why it had not come sooner was that no leader had emerged, able by his personality to arouse and unite the whole country. Such a man appeared in 1881 in the person of Mohammed Ahmed, a Dongolawi, aged thirty-three, the son of a

* Gessi's health broke down in 1880–81. He was taken to Khartoum by steamer and thence by camel to Suakin. On 30 April, 1881, he died at Suez.

boat-builder. His zeal for religious reform and a natural capacity for handling men gave him initial strength; the appalling conditions prevalent throughout the Sudan and the breakdown of any semblance of orderly administration provided opportunity and impetus. In August, having judiciously paved his way by enlisting the support of the warlike Baggara of Kordofan and put to the sword the few hundred troops sent to arrest him, he proclaimed himself at Abba Island on the White Nile to be the Mahdi, the Expected Messiah, the Divine Guide to Salvation.

The response was immediate throughout the northern Sudan, and the futility and indecision of the counter-measures taken by the Government served only to stimulate the hesitant. Though something was done in the early stages to check the movement to the south of the capital, the annihilation in May, 1882, of a large force sent westwards under Yusef Pasha el Hilali was the signal for general revolt and it was not long before the larger garrison towns were the only places in which any sort of control was maintained.

No attempt will be made to describe in detail the headlong course of events in the Sudan; but for an understanding both of the tragedies of the next few years and of what was to follow twenty years later, it is necessary at this point to touch upon the almost equally chaotic conditions which had arisen at this time in Egypt and compelled our own country to intervene there—and consequently, but in a most grudging and hesitant spirit, in the Sudan.

By 1881 Egypt was in a state of bankruptcy and the framework of society was at the point of collapse. The army was unpaid, untrained and undisciplined, and at the call of 'Arabi Pasha, a nationalist fanatic, had mutinied against the Khedive and his foreign supporters. In June, 1882, massacres of Europeans at Alexandria coincided with the successes of the Mahdi in the western Sudan, and the intervention of Europe became unavoidable. Fleets were dispatched by Great Britain and France, and in order to dislodge 'Arabi orders were given in July for the bombardment of the forts at Alexandria. The French ships received orders to take no part and sailed away. The town was not touched, but it was pillaged and set on fire by 'Arabi's retreating soldiery.*

* See evidence of Sir A. Cadogan at the 179th meeting of the Security Council on 11 August, 1947.

Great Britain's paramountcy in Egypt dates from July, 1882, and the same date marks the abdication by France of the position she had held since the days of Napoleon.

In September 'Arabi was decisively defeated at Tel el Kebir; the Egyptian army, which 'could mutiny, but could not, or would not fight', was dissolved, and Sir Evelyn Wood was set the task of forming a new Egyptian army commanded by a British Sirdar and with British and Egyptian officers. This force was, in the first instance, intended to be no more than a *gendarmerie*, consisting of two brigades of *fellahin*, but as the danger from the Sudan increased, it was expanded and came to be recruited in part from Egypt and in part from the Sudan.

Chapter 4

Great Britain Enters the Scene, 1882–5

A BRIEF outline has been given of the state of affairs in Egypt and the Sudan at the time of the outbreak of the Mahdi's rebellion, and no surprise can be felt at the fact that the Government in Cairo was as impotent to deal with the situation as were its representatives in Khartoum.

In Great Britain there was little understanding or interest evinced. To such of the public as had even heard of the Sudan it was just the scene of some exciting travel books written by explorers. The Government had hitherto given no particular thought to it, except in so far as they might have been moved by the protests of anti-slavery societies or the chance of complications arising with the Sublime Porte about its boundaries. It was true that some fairly well-known British subjects had held positions of responsibility there, but they had been servants of the Egyptians who had engaged them and not of Her Majesty's Government. Neither their actions nor their fate were of great moment to Whitehall.

But now circumstances had changed. Loth though the British Government was to admit it, the new responsibilities undertaken on behalf of Egypt could not be a strictly limited liability. In so far as there was any threat to the territory of Egypt itself, clearly it would have to be met by British supporting action, but the question less easy to answer was the very awkward one of what to do about the Sudan—a vast and not easily accessible country which had been grabbed by the Egyptians sixty years ago for no justifiable reason and left like a millstone round the neck of an invalid. There were garrisons and a civil population scattered about throughout the length and breadth of the land, who were in obvious danger, but how were they to be supported or reinforced when there were no reliable troops to hand nor, if there were, any money to pay for them? The alternative of evacuating the whole or most of the Sudan presented almost equal difficulties, and was in any case one which the Egyptian

Government was reluctant to contemplate. Neither Government, in fact, faced the issues squarely, though there were not lacking individual voices to press for more foresight and precaution. So long as a chance remained that the garrisons could hold out and order be restored there may have been some excuse for this; but once it became clear, as it inevitably did, that the Sudan could not be held, nothing but decisive action based on that fact was to be justified. Instead, endless hesitations and disputations, makeshifts and half-measures, held the field until it was too late.

An egregious document published in 1952 by the Egyptian Ministry for Foreign Affairs * concludes its first chapter by stating that the policy of withdrawal, eventually decided upon, was initiated and carried out by 'the British Consul-General in Cairo, Lord Cromer, who was aiming at the destruction of the organised Egyptian Government in the Soudan in order that he might plant the English foot firm in the whole Valley of the Nile'. It would be difficult to concoct a more fantastic story, as can be seen from every tittle of evidence available and has been ably demonstrated in the well-documented book published in the same year by a Sudanese, Dr Mekki Shibeika.† It is one, nevertheless, well calculated to appeal to an Eastern audience.

After the defeat of Yusef Pasha el Hilali in May, 1882, the Governor-General 'Abd el Gadir Pasha, who all agree to have been an energetic and capable officer, had repeatedly pleaded for reinforcements to be sent to him. But it was in vain, for Egypt was in the throes of revolution and the army had ceased to exist. In October, however, when some semblance of equilibrium had been restored, recruiting was begun, and some guns and stores had actually reached Khartoum by the end of the year. The news from Khartoum by now was becoming more and more serious: Khartoum might fall; the rebellion was spreading like wildfire; the Mahdi intended to march on Egypt. The British authorities in Egypt became seriously perturbed, and Sir Charles Wilson, as military adviser, recommended the reappointment of Gordon to take charge of affairs civil and military, the sending of a British mission to Khartoum and the diversion of a contingent of Indian troops to Suakin. At the Foreign Office in London

* *The Soudan Question based on British Documents*, Misr Press, Cairo, 1952.
† *British Policy in the Sudan, 1882–1902*, 1952.

Lord Granville was unco-operative and content to stress the responsibility of the Egyptian Government for whatever action might be required. At Cairo Sir Edward Malet took the same line, advising that the Egyptians should be left 'without aid or advice from Her Majesty's Government', lest it should find itself at a later stage drawn into military commitments in the Sudan.

The British Government declined even to take any part in the choice of officers to be recruited for staff duties in the Sudan. The only proposal that received assent was to send a British officer, not 'in any military capacity', but solely to report on the situation. The choice fell upon Colonel D. H. Stewart. He proceeded south at once, and his report was published early in 1883. His main recommendation was in a passage which stated:

> 'I am firmly convinced that the Egyptians are quite unfit in every way to undertake such a trust as the government of so vast a country with a view to its welfare, and that both for their own sake and that of the people they try to rule, it would be advisable to abandon large portions of it.'

He advised that Egypt should restrict her activities to the northern parts of the Sudan and east of the White Nile, Equatoria and the rest being left 'to be governed by their sheiks and former rulers'.

At about the same time Lord Dufferin, lately Ambassador to the Porte, was invited to visit Egypt on a special mission in order to advise Her Majesty's Government concerning various complications arising from the system of international control, including relations with Turkey. Things being as they were, he was also asked for his advice about the Sudan and the possibility of danger to Egypt. He took the view that Egypt should certainly evacuate Darfur (where Slatin was still in charge) and that perhaps they should get rid of the whole of their encumbrance: the difficulty, he felt, lay in the fact that, chiefly for reasons of prestige, it would not be easy to persuade any Egyptian Government to adopt such a course, nor was it to be overlooked that the Sudan had great potentialities for agriculture and trade. As for efficient administration, this could be achieved only if someone like Gordon were entrusted with the task. Lord Dufferin also

mentioned an incidental advantage that would accrue from sending troops to the Sudan: it would absorb many of the discontented personnel of the disbanded army and at the same time enable a mixed force to be built up which would afford some protection to Egypt. Before leaving Cairo he further committed himself to the opinion that Egypt would be wise to confine her efforts to Sennar and the riverain districts: he had, in fact, come to the same conclusion as Colonel Stewart.

El Obeid was under siege by the Mahdi at this juncture, and on 17 January, 1883, after suffering appalling privations, it fell. The Gezira area and Sennar also declared for the Mahdi. Of the troops who were to deal with these troubles Stewart wrote:

> 'Besides the gross ignorance of the Egyptian officers nothing is more striking than their want of initiative and their unwillingness to assume any responsibility. . . . The troops in garrison here [*Khartoum*] are working at elementary drill and tactics and are making some progress. It is, however, very uphill work, the officers are so grossly ignorant, and so incapable of grasping the meaning of the simplest movement. Quite one third of the troops are also ignorant of the use of the rifle and they would be more formidable as adversaries were they simply armed with sticks. Many have also superstitious ideas of the power of the Mahdi and others think the Khedive has simply sent them here to get rid of them.'

Again, in the following month, he wrote of the behaviour of officers and men alike to the natives of the country:

> 'Their general conduct and overbearing manner is almost sufficient to cause a rebellion. When to this conduct cowardice is added it is impossible for me to avoid expressing my contempt and disgust.'

It will be evident that the task of the Governor-General, with such material only available, was not an enviable one. In addition, as Stewart reported and the archives testify, he was continually hampered by backstairs intrigue and interference from functionaries in Cairo.

It had, however, been decided by the Egyptian authorities to send a relief expedition to Kordofan, and this in spite of

contrary advice by Stewart, backed by Dufferin and Malet, all of whom urged that the right course was to consolidate the position on the Nile. In March, 1883, General Hicks, an ex-Indian Army officer, who had been appointed by the Egyptian Government to the staff of the Sudan Army for this purpose, arrived in Khartoum. He found there considerable confusion. The Governor-General, 'Abd el Gadir Pasha, was in course of being superseded and the nominal command of the troops had been placed in the hands of a decrepit veteran on the understanding—consistently ignored in practice—that he was to defer in all things to Hicks, who was 'held responsible for all preparations and operations'. This arrangement failed to work, and ultimately Hicks was made Commander-in-Chief, but without the resources in men and money which he demanded.

In London Lord Granville was content to emphasise repeatedly the need to avoid any form of interference or responsibility. He appears, says Lord Cromer,* 'to have thought that he threw off all responsibility by declaring that he was not responsible'. Instead of recognising the basic fact that the British Government held full control and was well able to prevent the mad adventure to which Hicks was committed, 'he took shelter behind an illusory abnegation of responsibility which was a mere phantom of the diplomatic and parliamentary mind'. In the result the British Government was soon committed to 'a degree of intervention far greater than would have been necessary had the true facts of the situation been in the first instance recognised.'

In April and May Hicks made a reconnaissance in force up the White Nile. He met with an unexpected degree of success and fought a successful action at Gebel 'Ain which caused premature jubilation in Cairo. The rainy season then set in and Hicks returned to his headquarters to make preparations for the great advance westwards. Again he begged for reinforcements and, above all, for funds to pay his troops, but received only some motley contingents of men. Egypt was still bankrupt, and Granville and Malet, both of whom appear to have been far more worried by the financial aspect of the matter than by any other, continued their line of masterly inactivity.

On 8 September Hicks' full force of 7,000 infantry and

* Cromer, I, 366.

about 1,000 mounted troops paraded at Omdurman and started on their fatal journey. The new Governor-General, 'Ala el Din Pasha, accompanied them. The details of their march need not be recounted. It is abundantly clear that the outcome would have been no less inevitable even if the force had been twice as large. The Mahdi was perfectly content to allow the army to lose itself in the trackless bush and suffer the privations of hunger and thirst: treacherous guides, lack of discipline, disharmony in the command, faulty commissariat and low morale all contributed to catastrophe. On 5 November at Shekan, near Rahad, to the south of El Obeid, the Dervishes fell upon the luckless force and annihilated it. The news of the disaster and the death of 'Ala el Din and Hicks reached Cairo on 22 November and realisation began to seep into the minds of Ministers that it marked the end of their dreams of territorial aggrandisement.

But now at long last signs of a definite and less pusillanimously negative attitude on the part of the British became apparent. This change was due in the main to the arrival in Egypt on 8 September, 1883, of Sir Evelyn Baring (Lord Cromer)* to represent the British Government as Agent and Consul-General. Even before the Hicks *débâcle* he had drawn attention to the inescapable realities of the situation and, foreseeing what was likely to happen, urged the need for decision. For his own part he favoured withdrawal to whatever point on the Nile the Egyptians could hold with confidence, and even Granville could raise no objection to such advice being given, if advice were asked for. When the news of disaster reached Cairo events moved fast, for it was not only in Kordofan that the storm had broken. In Darfur, Slatin was forced to surrender and taken prisoner in December. In the east 'Osman Digna, ex-slave trader of Suakin, half Turk and half Hadendoa, invested the Egyptian garrisons on the Red Sea littoral and in Kassala and set about cutting the lines of communication with the Nile. Stout resistance had been offered at Sinkat and elsewhere, but October and November saw a series of heavy disasters to Egyptian arms. In the south the Dinka had risen, and Lupton, who had succeeded Gessi as Governor, was beleaguered.

The British Government remained obstinately opposed to

* Although the title was not assumed until 1892 it will be used consistently hereafter to avoid confusion.

furnishing British or Indian troops for the defence of the Sudan, and a series of somewhat disingenuous suggestions for the employment of Turkish troops was rejected on legal, financial, political and practical grounds. It was clear to British civil and military representatives alike that the only feasible course for Egypt was to withdraw all garrisons from the interior and be content to hold the Red Sea ports and, for the time being, the line of communications through Berber to the north. The Egyptians were extremely reluctant to follow this advice and face the facts, but equally devoid of practical suggestions for any alternative. Their main preoccupation was to avoid all semblance of responsibility. Finally Lord Cromer, with the approval of the Government in London, who were being severely harried by the Conservative opposition in Parliament, was compelled to issue an ultimatum to the effect that if the Egyptian Ministers would not accept the advice given they would be removed. The Khedive, realising that the threat was not an empty one, gave way and told Lord Cromer that he 'accepted cordially the policy of abandoning the whole of the Sudan'. Nubar Pasha, who was of the same opinion, consented to form a ministry. The Sultan of Turkey, suzerain of Egypt, was at this stage entirely uninterested.

Orders were then sent (18 January, 1884) for the withdrawal of the garrisons and the civil population, either by way of Berber and Suakin or by the Nile route. For the direction of these most difficult operations, 'Abd el Gadir Pasha having declined the honour, the choice fell upon General Gordon by virtue of his unique experience and the strength of popular demand in England. He was approached, expressed his unqualified approval of the policy of evacuation at all costs, and accepted the mission, together with the appointment of Governor-General.

In the same month a body of *gendarmerie* was sent under command of General Valentine Baker to extricate the Red Sea garrisons and attempt 'by diplomatic means' to keep open communications with Berber. The task was hopeless from the outset, and on 5 February his raw undisciplined levies were cut to pieces at El Teb. The same fate befell the garrison of Sinkat. Suakin alone survived.

This accumulation of disasters, following the annihilation of General Hicks, roused excitement in England, and Gladstone's Government came under heavy fire. Queen Victoria

herself felt deeply the fate that had befallen British officers and represented to her Prime Minister the need 'to act with energy at last' and do something to save the Sudan from rapine and chaos. To do nothing, she said, would be 'a disgrace to the British name, and the country will *not* stand it'.

On 11 February Mr. Gladstone was forced to agree to the dispatch of an expedition, manned by trained troops from Cairo under General Graham, to relieve Tokar. Tokar fell before its arrival, but Graham pressed on and inflicted two heavy reverses upon 'Osman Digna, the first on 29 February at El Teb, the second on 13 March at Tamai near Suakin. British casualties at El Teb were 189 of all ranks, those at Tamai thirteen officers and 208 men. To keep open communications with the river and Khartoum was quite impossible, and indeed the whole of Graham's gallant venture was no more than a waste of lives.

On his arrival at Berber (10 February) with Colonel Stewart, Gordon proclaimed the restoration of the country to its ancient rulers, and when he reached Khartoum (18 February), from which many Europeans had already departed, at once instituted drastic reforms, remitted taxation, released prisoners, burned old records of debts and—more popular than all—contradicted any intention of taking existing slaves away from their masters: what use could it be to say or do anything else if the country was to be left to its own people? These measures were loudly acclaimed, but their effect was purely temporary. The Mahdi's position was not weakened, and he rejected all overtures made to him.

Gordon's repeated demands for Zubeir Pasha to be sent from Cairo to lead the tribes against the Mahdi were refused by the British Government in spite of Cromer's support, on account of the violent protests of anti-slavery societies and their parliamentary supporters—as had been previous suggestions that he should be sent to the Red Sea area to deal with 'Osman Digna. The defences of Khartoum had been strengthened and it only remained for Gordon to hold the fort. By March, 1884, Khartoum was beleaguered, and the best Mr. Gladstone's Government could do was to leave him 'full discretion either to remain where he was or to retire by any route which might be found available'. In April Gedaref and the Bahr el Ghazal garrisons surrendered, though Emin Pasha still held out in southern Equatoria, and Lupton was

sent to join Slatin in captivity. In May Berber fell and the Dervishes advanced on Dongola, but were thrown back by the Egyptian Army. In the same month Egypt formally abandoned the Somali coast, and in June a British mission arranged with the Negus of Abyssinia that in return for the cession of Bogos and Keren he should assist in the evacuation of Kassala and other eastern garrisons. By August the Mahdi was supreme everywhere except in the extreme north and south, on the Red Sea coast and inside the walls of Khartoum.

In England a fatal indecision continued to prevail. Excuses for this have been made: communications were difficult, messages failed to get through or arrived in garbled form or in wrong sequence; only occasional glimpses could be got of what was really happening in the distant unknown wastes of the south. But the truth is that Gladstone and his Liberal colleagues had detested the whole enterprise from its very commencement. To them the Sudanese were 'a people rightly struggling to be free' from the yoke of the corrupt Pashas of Egypt and the slave-traders. Irritation and prejudice, further stimulated by the bugbear of economy, blinded them to the over-riding fact that by assuming power in Egypt, as they had been compelled to do, they had incurred an inescapable responsibility. Had Gordon's mission been successful they would have claimed the credit for foresight and caution, for saving the garrisons and entrusting the Sudan to the care of its own people. They ignored the corollary; and they would not face the fact, though it was placed unequivocally before them, that the sole chance of success lay in swift and decisive action, and not in hesitation, half-measures and futile queries. Whatever Gordon's shortcomings as a conventional writer of letters and telegrams, and however many or few he sent or received, he had made it abundantly clear that, since he had accepted the task of evacuating the garrisons as best he could, his solemn duty lay in ensuring that all should be saved, wherever they were. He would not be content with less: he would not withdraw and leave any of them to their fate, nor quit Khartoum 'unless a regular government is established on the part of some power' —whether Turkey or Zubeir or another. Whether or not, as Cromer felt, he meant to force the hands of the British Government into sending an expedition to the Sudan for this purpose—and it could obviously be achieved in no other way—

is really immaterial. By entrusting the mission to Gordon they had committed themselves to the consequences.

Had the Government decided to send the expedition in the early spring of 1884 its chances of at least reaching Khartoum and saving the garrison would have been reasonable, for the way was still open, and Sennar might also have been saved.

> 'The most indulgent critic [says Lord Cromer]* would scarcely extend beyond June 27 the date at which the Government should have decided on the question of whether a relief expedition should or should not be dispatched. On that day the news that Berber had been captured on May 26 by the Dervishes was finally confirmed; yet it was not till six weeks later that the Government obtained from Parliament the funds necessary to prepare for an expedition.'

On 26 August Lord Wolseley was given the command. He arrived with his British troops in Cairo on 10 September. Not until 8 October, three days after he had actually left for the south, were his instructions finally approved. The gist of them lay in the following words:

> 'The primary object of the expedition up the Valley of the Nile is to bring away General Gordon and Colonel Stewart from Khartoum. When that object has been secured, no further offensive operations of any kind are to be undertaken. Although you are not precluded from advancing as far as Khartoum, should you consider such a step essential to insure the safe retreat of General Gordon and Colonel Stewart, you should bear in mind that Her Majesty's Government is desirous to limit the sphere of your military operations as much as possible.' †

He was also reminded that the policy of the Government was that Egyptian rule in the Sudan should cease, though order should, if possible, be maintained by subsidising native chiefs (Zubeir always excepted) who might be strong enough to hold the line of the main Nile, on condition of their remaining at peace with Egypt and repelling raids upon it and discouraging the slave trade.

The Nile route was the only possible one for Wolseley's army, but it presented grave difficulties. In particular, there

* Cromer, I, 590. † Cromer, I, 582.

were the cataracts to be negotiated, for which purpose a corps of Canadian *voyageurs*, Iroquois Indians and British sailors was engaged with 800 boats, all of which had to be hauled against the current, when the river was low and jagged rocks protruding, by gangs of men to Korti. Camels, too, had to be purchased for the camel corps and transport of supplies across the direct desert stretch from Korti towards Khartoum. A few days after Christmas the river column and the desert column left Korti and on 17 January, 1885, the latter heavily defeated a force of 11,000 Dervishes at Abu Tleih ('Abu Klea'). Two days later a second action was fought and won, and at Metemma on 21 January the force found some of Gordon's steamers which had held their own there for nearly four months. On the 28th an advance party pressing forward under Sir Charles Wilson arrived with two steamers off Tuti Island to find the flag no longer flying over Khartoum.

Long before the relieving force had even entered the Sudan, Khartoum was in terrible straits. Gordon's best fighting commander had been cut to pieces on the east bank of the Blue Nile, and realising that all was lost he sent Colonel Stewart and the British and French Consuls with a party of Greek civilians to get into touch, if they could, with Wolseley's troops. The steamer went aground at the fourth cataract and all were treacherously murdered. In Khartoum, food now ran short and the bombardment was continuous. Gordon refused with disdain an offer from the Mahdi to surrender and be given a safe conduct to the north, and by sheer force of personality and unceasing energy kept hope alive; but the end had come. The Mahdi had realised after the defeat of Abu Tleih that the slow process of investment would mean the arrival of the British troops while Khartoum still stood and that his only hope of success lay in storming the town betimes. He massed his forces, and before dawn on Sunday 25 January some 50,000 fanatics broke through the defences on the west side of the town and rushed forward to the Palace. Gordon had donned his white uniform, and as they surged up the stairway he met them, calm and fearless to the last. Of the horrors which followed one cannot bear to speak. They are best forgotten; but of Gordon himself—that knight-errant of the nineteenth century—and his claim to immortality, it is enough to quote the words of the great pro-consul

who knew him so well, who was often exasperated by his vagaries and mutability and abhorrence of red tape, but who never failed to support him to the full.

> 'General Gordon [wrote Lord Cromer]* did not know what the word fear meant. Death had no terrors for him. . . . His faith was sublime. Strong in that faith, he could meet the savage who plunged a spear into his breast with a gesture of scorn, and with the sure and certain hope of immortality which had been promised to him by the Master in whose footsteps he had endeavoured to follow. . . . He died in the plenitude of his reputation, and left a name which will be revered so long as the qualities of steadfast faith and indomitable courage have any hold on the feelings of mankind.'

* Cromer, II, 11–15.

Chapter 5

The Dervishes. The European Powers Enter the Scene, 1885–98

WOLSELEY had wished, in spite of all, to advance and retake Khartoum. He was not allowed to do so, for the British Government rightly felt that nothing could be gained at that time, and they were also facing troubles with Russia in the Far East. Orders were given to withdraw. On 10 March, 1885, a Dervish force was defeated at Kirbekan to the north-east of Merowe, in pursuance of the policy to hold Dongola Province, as well as the Red Sea hinterland, and to build a railway from the latter to Berber in preparation for an autumn campaign against the Mahdi. As part of the same policy, General Graham was sent with some 13,000 British, Indian and Australian troops to Suakin and from that centre in March fought a series of costly but indecisive engagements with 'Osman Digna. Meanwhile, however, Mr. Gladstone's Government had changed their minds and decided to leave the Mahdi undisturbed for the present; the railway project was to be dropped and Dongola evacuated, but Suakin was to be held. Emin Pasha in Equatoria was informed by the Egyptian Government that the Sudan was to be abandoned and he must find his way out as best he could.* The Abyssinians, it may be added, carried out their pledge to relieve the frontier garrisons in compensation for the return of their lost provinces and convoyed the survivors to Massawa, which had been seized in February by the Italians. Kassala itself could not be evacuated and was forced to capitulate in July. Sennar fell in August.

In June Gladstone's Government resigned and that august and masterful statesman, Lord Salisbury, took office. Two days before, on 22 June, the Mahdi had died and been succeeded by his nominee, the Khalifa 'Abdullahi, one of the Ta'aisha Baggara of Darfur. This was a man of altogether

* He was eventually relieved in 1887 by an expedition organised from the south by H. M. Stanley and taken to Zanzibar.

different type and one in whom the religious motive, however prominent, was subordinate to the militant. He at once decided upon the invasion of Egypt and placed at the head of his troops the finest and most fanatical of his commanders, the Emir Wad el Negumi. By November the Dervishes were in touch with the frontier field force, consisting of about 1,700 British and 1,500 Egyptian troops under General Stevenson. On 30 December they were routed at Ginnis, between Dongola and Halfa, and thrown back.

For the three years that followed it fell upon the rehabilitated Egyptian Army, now officered by British and including several black Sudanese battalions, to hold the frontier of Egypt. It is worth noting at this point that during the years 1882–5 inclusive the British Treasury spent more than £13,000,000 on military expeditions to the Sudan and that up to 31 July, 1885, 1,971 British officers and men had died and 6,863 been invalided 'in consequence of our operations in Egypt', and that when British and Indian troops were withdrawn from Suakin early in 1886 the Egyptian garrison left in charge was paid for by the British Government.*

During these same years the Khalifa was increasingly beset by troubles. 'Osman Digna suffered a severe defeat at the hands of the Abyssinians in 1885; a revolt broke out in the west, where Senussist influences antagonistic to Mahdism had spread from North Africa; the Kababish were harrying Wad el Negumi's flanks in Dongola, and the Khalifa was forced to take the precaution of moving all the fighting men of his own tribe, the Ta'aisha, to Omdurman to serve as a bodyguard. But the most serious threat to his power came from the Abyssinians, who were continuously active during 1887 and 1888. A heavy reverse was suffered by the Dervishes in the lowlands in June, 1887, but they returned to the attack with large reinforcements, forced their way into the highlands, and defeated the Abyssinian armies at Gondar. After a campaign chequered by alternate victory and defeat they were finally successful by the narrowest of margins. King John of Abyssinia's death at Gallabat decided the issue; his head was carried in triumph to Omdurman and his dispirited armies returned to the mountains.

The Khalifa was now free to concentrate afresh upon the invasion of Egypt. In 1889 the indomitable Wad el Negumi

* See H. Russell, *The Ruin of the Soudan* ... (1892).

pushed northwards beyond Halfa, but at Toski on 3 August he met the troops of the Sirdar, Sir F. Grenfell, who had succeeded Sir Evelyn Wood, and was killed with some 1,200 of his men and the loss of 4,000 prisoners.

With this blow ended the Khalifa's dreams of conquest, and Egypt was relieved of serious menace. The Dervish power had passed its zenith. The country had relapsed into sheer barbarism and its population groaned under the burden of anarchy. The cultivation of food crops was almost at a standstill; famine and disease were the common lot; there was neither justice nor security to be had. Revolts broke out in Darfur, Kordofan and on the Upper Nile. In February, 1891, 'Osman Digna was heavily defeated by the Egyptian Army at Tokar. In 1893 an expedition sent to break the Italian power in Eritrea suffered the same fate at Agordat, and the Dinka overwhelmed a force which had been sent to raid them from Darfur. In the following year the Italians advanced and seized Kassala. The Belgians also made a move from the Congo with intent to establish themselves on the Nile, but after some initial success were checked by the Dervishes and subsequently, under the terms of an agreement with the French, gave way for the time being to the latter, who proceeded to establish themselves in the Bahr el Ghazal. Later, as we shall see, the Belgians moved forward again and occupied the Lado Enclave, after routing the Dervish force which tried to prevent them.

The Khalifa, in spite of his many preoccupations and the fate that had befallen Wad el Negumi, renewed his raids on the Egyptian frontier in 1895, and the question arose in London and Cairo whether the time had not come to take the step, which had already been accepted as ultimately inevitable so soon as Egyptian finances and military preparedness permitted, and reoccupy the Sudan. At first the British Government was disposed, largely on financial grounds, to defer action for a while; but early in 1896 events in Abyssinia turned the scale. On 29 February the Italians had suffered a catastrophic defeat at the hands of the Abyssinians at Adowa and were now also threatened by the Dervishes. They appealed for help and it was decided, as a first step, to reoccupy Dongola forthwith. Difficulties at once arose with the French Government, which took the line that such a move would prove highly displeasing to public opinion and,

supported by the Russians, opposed the authorisation of the Egyptian Government to receive funds from the *caisse de la dette* for expenditure on the campaign, and also prompted the Sultan of Turkey to protest and use his legal rights to the same end. In addition, the Khedive, Abbas II, abetted by the extreme nationalist party, offered bitter opposition, on the ground that British troops were to take part and that the fate of the Italians was a matter of no concern to Egypt. This attitude they maintained throughout the Dongola campaign with support from Turkey and, may be, with Russian connivance, although more sober and thoughtful spirits had long realised that sooner or later the restoration of order and the establishment of a firm control in the Sudan were necessary to Egypt, not merely on grounds of military security but for the safeguarding of her vital water supply.

Salisbury, as was his wont, took a firm line with the Porte and the Khedive alike and rejected the French protests. The expedition set forth under the command of Sir Herbert Kitchener, who had succeeded Grenfell as Sirdar, advanced up the river and in June, 1896, destroyed the frontier army of the Khalifa at Firket, between the second and third cataracts. By September New Dongola, Debba, Korti and Merowe had been occupied and the prisoners of Firket enlisted as a Sudanese battalion.

By May, 1897, Kitchener's railway had only reached Kerma, but he now decided to link Halfa direct by rail across the desert with Abu Hamed, from where the final advance could follow the river.

The Emir Mahmud, summoned from Darfur to oppose the advance and bent upon making it clear that no weakness would be tolerated, laid waste the western provinces as he came, sweeping before him everything that was left alive, and occupied Metemma in spite of a gallant resistance by its inhabitants.

By the end of August the Egyptian Army had reached Abu Hamed. Berber fell in September and the gunboats were in a position to bombard Mahmud. In the east, meanwhile, 'Osman Digna had retreated from the Red Sea hinterland, and on Christmas Day, 1897, Kassala was taken over from the Italians, who were only too glad by now to be rid of it.

Up to this point the troops at Kitchener's disposal had been Egyptians and Sudanese with British officers. Discipline,

training and experience had converted crude material into a reliable fighting force, very different from the mobs of the previous decade. But Kitchener felt that additional stiffening was called for, and on 1 January, 1898, wired to Cromer for British troops to be sent. Four British battalions were at once dispatched to reinforce the Egyptian Army, and by the beginning of March one British and two Egyptian–Sudanese brigades, together with a regiment of Egyptian cavalry, twenty-four field and horse artillery guns and twelve Maxims, was concentrated between Berber and the mouth of the Atbara. The force then advanced to the Atbara, and on 8 April Mahmud's army was practically annihilated. Mahmud himself was taken alive and sent to Egypt. The casualties of the attacking force were twenty British officers and 539 men: of these the Egyptian battalions lost one man killed and thirteen wounded.

During the spring and summer preparations for the final advance were perfected and a force of 8,200 British troops and 17,600 officers and men of the Egyptian Army (Egyptians and Sudanese) advanced on Omdurman. On the early morning of 2 September the whole pomp and pageantry of the Dervishes came out to offer them battle, and were broken, between the river and the hills of Kerreri. The surging hordes, with banners flying and drums beating, rushed with the fury of fanaticism upon their fate and were mown down in their thousands by steady rifle-fire.* It was the end of an epoch.

Two days later the Sirdar crossed the river to Khartoum and the British and Egyptian flags were run up on the ruins of Gordon's palace. Much, however, remained to be done. The Khalifa had escaped to the south-west, 'Osman Digna to the east, and the whole Sudan was in a state of uproar and confusion. Its pacification was necessarily a gradual process; many Dervish contingents had to be eliminated and military posts established in outlying areas. Not until November could the western area be tackled and the Khalifa brought to bay. On 24 November Sir Reginald Wingate, who was

* Of the total casualties of fifty-six killed and 434 wounded suffered by the Egyptian Army the British lost twenty-seven killed and 133 wounded, the Egyptians fourteen killed and 152 wounded; the remaining casualties were among the Sudanese battalions. The total cost of the campaign of 1896–8 was £E2,354,000. Of this about £E1,544,000 was paid by the Egyptian treasury and rather less than £E800,000 by the British Government.

shortly to succeed Kitchener as Governor-General, ran the Mahdi's successor to earth at Um Debeikerat, not far from Abba Island, where the Mahdi had proclaimed his mission eighteen years before, and put the seal upon the reconquest of the Sudan. The last of the Dervish armies was wiped out with the loss of 600 killed and 3,000 taken prisoner. The bodies of the Khalifa and his bodyguard and ten of his most faithful *emirs* were found together and buried where they lay. Gedaref, Sennar, Roseires and Gallabat had already been taken; El Obeid was reoccupied in December. Not until the spring of 1900 was the elusive 'Osman Digna brought finally to book in the east and the northern districts of the Bahr el Ghazal pacified. Darfur remained, unoccupied, under the rule of its Sultan for another sixteen years.

Three days after the battle of Omdurman there arrived from the south a native boat the crew of which reported that they had been fired upon by white men to the north of the *sudd* area. This to Kitchener could mean only one thing: the arrival of a French party led by Major Marchand, which he had been warned to expect. A situation of the greatest delicacy was clearly about to arise.

But before relating the course of subsequent events it will be as well at this point to break the thread of the narrative and say something of the international background as it existed at this time in central Africa and the basin of the Nile. For the last eight years the Powers of Europe had been busy staking their claims in these vast and little-known areas. The cutting of the Suez Canal had opened up new possibilities of trade to ships plying along the coast of East Africa. This trade involved penetration into the interior and the establishment of friendly relations with the native chiefs with whom the explorers of all nationalities had already made contact; and Christian missionaries had also seen and seized their opportunity to spread the Gospel regardless of hardship and danger. Each of the Great Powers had also the wider ambition of establishing its own influence and authority by one means or another over as wide an area as possible, and this involved the pegging out of claims with all speed in order to anticipate their rivals. And so began what was soon known as the 'scramble for Africa'. On the one hand there was a desire, genuine to a varying extent, on the part of all to bring the

benefits of civilisation, cultural and economic, to savage peoples; on the other an equally genuine determination to see that others did not take undue advantage of the civilising spirit to acquire areas which might constitute a danger to themselves or an impediment to further expansion. Each motive had a strong appeal to public opinion of one kind or another in Great Britain, Germany, France, Portugal, Belgium and Italy, and governments naturally tended to justify their policy on the grounds most likely to be popular.

In England the humanitarian appeal was particularly strong; so also was that of imperialism and high adventure, for it was the age of Salisbury, Rosebery and Rhodes; but an over-riding consideration was unquestionably the vital need to prevent any other Power from obtaining control over the head-waters of the Nile, and so indirectly of Egypt, for the safety of which we had accepted responsibility. In Cromer's words: 'Whatever Power holds the Upper Nile Valley must, by the mere force of its geographical situation, dominate Egypt'. To this theme he continually recurred and it formed the basis upon which the policy of Salisbury and himself consistently rested.

In France the dominant motive was a chauvinistic imperialism and the re-establishment of that Napoleonic predominance in Egypt which had been forfeited when the French had shirked their share in the suppression of 'Arabi and the restoration of order. Bismarck's Germany was more concerned with trade and economic expansion than any other objective. Belgium, and King Leopold in particular, thought chiefly of Africa's potential wealth. Portugal was moved by the thought of ancient glories associated with the names of Henry the Navigator and Vasco da Gama. To the French and Portuguese in particular the idea of an empire stretching across Africa from east to west seemed eminently desirable, not only in itself but because it would put an end to the danger of a British 'all-red' dominion stretching from the Cape to Cairo. Italy, for her part, was less interested in the Valley of the Nile than in the potential riches of Abyssinia; nor was she unmindful of the advantages, as they at one time appeared, of pushing her way into the eastern Sudan.

By the end of 1884 the Chancelleries of Europe were busy with the process of establishing 'Spheres of Influence'. In some cases agreement was reached; more often it was not.

On 26 February, 1885, on Bismarck's initiative, a 'General Act of the African Conference' was signed at Berlin 'to demonstrate the agreement of the Powers with regard to the general principles which should guide their commercial and civilising action in the little known or inadequately organised regions of a continent where slavery and the slave trade still flourished'. In the same year Bismarck took possession of a coastal strip in East Africa, while the explorer Nachtigal was establishing a footing for Germany in the west. England, by way of riposte, granted a royal charter to the Niger Company and also established herself in Bechuanaland and made treaties with the coastal tribes of Somaliland. In April, 1886, to the great chagrin of the Germans, Rosebery took control of Socotra.

Italy at the same time entered the field and occupied Assab and Massawa as a preliminary to the acquisition of Eritrea. British and German Spheres of Interest in East Africa were defined on 1 November of the same year. The British East Africa Company was founded in April, 1888, to acquire and administer territories within the British sphere and, by Salisbury's direction, given a royal charter. The same was done in the following year for the British South Africa Company, of which Rhodes was the leading spirit, and about the same time Italy by the Treaty of Occiali obtained what was regarded as a virtual protectorate over Abyssinia.

Karl Peters, the founder of German East Africa, who had in 1888 conducted an expedition into the interior 'to relieve Emin Pasha'—a task undertaken with greater success by H. M. Stanley—was simultaneously busy trying to incorporate the Equatorial provinces of the Sudan into the German sphere. He reached Uganda in 1889 and persuaded its King to accept a German Protectorate, but this did not deter that monarch from placing his country, a month later, under a British Protectorate. At this stage Salisbury, strongly seconded by Rhodes and aided by the fulminations of Stanley, took a firm stand against encroachment into the Nile Valley and across Africa. In the event an amicable settlement was reached in May, 1890, with the Germans, whose interests in Europe at that time coincided with our own rather than with those of the Franco-Russian group, and the bargain was sealed by the cession of Heligoland in exchange for rights in Zanzibar, Uganda and what is now Kenya. The respective Spheres of Influences were defined in July.

King Leopold of Belgium, meanwhile, was not behindhand and attempted in 1890 to extend the Congo border to the Nile. In putting a stop to this enterprise Salisbury was able to enlist the support of the French, for they, too, had ambitions in that quarter. These Salisbury was prepared to counter when the time was ripe, but in the interim he was ready to show a large complaisance and be extremely accommodating in other directions. Accordingly he made agreements with the French recognising as their sphere the whole of the vast and not very lucrative tracts that lay between the Mediterranean and Lake Chad. He is recorded at this juncture as saying in a speech at the Mansion House that the French Ambassador and he had been 'giving away mountains and rivers and lakes to each other, but we have only been hindered by the small impediment that we never knew exactly where those mountains and rivers and lakes were'. This same impediment, twenty-nine years later, almost wrecked the attempt to define the boundary between Darfur and French Equatorial Africa by reference to an undefined 'Nile–Congo watershed'. Portugal too took action to assert her rights and endeavoured to enlist French and German support for her own idea of acquiring the basin of the Zambesi and linking her eastern and western colonies. This would have wrecked the 'Rhodesian' conception, and Salisbury, since Bismarck's fall the dominating figure in Europe, would have none of it. A serious crisis supervened, and eventually Portugal was forced to abandon her scheme; a Convention was signed in August, 1890, but nearly a year passed before the Cortes could be induced to ratify it. In the result Great Britain obtained the vast area of the two Rhodesias.

In the first half of 1891 Great Britain, perturbed by Italian designs for a westward advance from Abyssinia, had intervened and reached an agreement which was embodied in a protocol defining the Spheres of Influence of the two parties in East Africa and, with due regard to safeguards for Egyptian rights, fixing the boundary between the Sudan and the new colony of Eritrea. The Dervishes, as we have seen, opposed any further advance, but were defeated at Agordat in 1893 and Kassala fell to the Italians in 1894. Under the terms of the agreement of 1891 they handed it over two and a half years later to a detachment of the Egyptian Army.

The resignation of Lord Salisbury after the general election of 1892 made little difference to England's foreign policy, for Lord Rosebery, no less imperially minded than his predecessor and equally determined to safeguard the Nile Valley, had converted Mr. Gladstone to his views. In 1895, after the Home Rule controversy had died down, Salisbury was returned with an overwhelming majority and again took charge of the Foreign Office.

Affairs in Africa had not stood still. The Belgians and the French had continued their pressure, and in 1892 the former crossed the Nile–Congo watershed and advanced towards the Nile in the face of Dervish opposition. It was not until May, 1894, that an agreement was signed between Great Britain and the Congo Free State defining their respective Spheres of Influence and leasing the Lado Enclave on the west bank of the Nile on either side of Rejaf to King Leopold. By a further agreement in 1906 it was arranged that on the King's death (which took place in 1910) the Enclave should be handed over to the Sudanese Government.

The Franco-Belgian agreement of 1894 has already been mentioned: by February, 1896, the French had occupied most of the Bahr el Ghazal, while the Belgians seized Rejaf from the Dervishes and occupied the Enclave.

A far darker cloud now appeared upon the horizon. Since 1893 the French had been meditating ways and means of undermining the British position in Egypt and had decided to send an expedition to Fashoda, which was, from the hydrographical point of view, the key point on the Upper Nile. No secret was made of the intention, but for a time Belgian rivalry led to delay. In 1894 it was decided to over-ride Belgian objections, to dispatch the expedition and supplement it by another moving westwards towards the same point on the river from Abyssinia. The British Government warned the French of the likelihood of serious conflict if the project were pursued, and for a time action was delayed. A few months later the French, under pressure from the colonialist party, again decided, without giving publicity to the fact, to go forward. By the spring of 1895 the British public had learnt of this, articles in the Press and speeches in Parliament had caused a furore and Sir Edward Grey, speaking as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, went so far as to say that he could not believe the rumours were true because the French

must know that action of the kind alleged 'would be an unfriendly act and would be so viewed by England'.

Negotiations followed at a high level, but to no purpose, since the French believed that the British Government was bluffing—and were mistaken. Each party then resolved to pursue its own determined policy. In September Marchand was invited to formulate his plans for reaching the Nile, and it is now clear enough from official documents that the ulterior motive, without question, was, by first compelling the British to evacuate the Sudan, to bring about the abandonment of Egypt. Instructions were drafted for Marchand in February, 1896. In June he set forth. The auxiliary expedition from the east by way of the Baro and Sobat rivers started early in 1897, but failed to win through.

These were difficult times for Salisbury. He had been beset with troublesome problems on all sides, and in particular the Venezuela dispute with the United States and the quarrel with Russia, who had seized Port Arthur in the Far East. The Marchand affair was obviously made the more serious by the fact that Russia had recently signed a secret treaty with France, and he remarked early in 1898, 'I do not think we carry enough guns to fight them and the French together'. Kitchener, he added, was already on the march to Khartoum and 'in six months time we shall be on the verge of war with France. I cannot afford to quarrel with Russia now'. To him the redemption of the Sudan and the safety of Egypt were of paramount importance, and his determination never faltered.

The narrative which was interrupted to permit of this rough sketch of the international background can now be resumed. Kitchener had received news at Omdurman on 5 September, 1898, of the arrival of Marchand at Fashoda. This tallied with secret information and instructions which he had received from London written in Salisbury's own hand. They had been forwarded to him and his two senior officers, Generals Hunter and Rundle, to be stitched in the linings of their tunics and opened only after arrival at Khartoum, and were in identical terms.* They disclosed the facts of the Marchand expedition and its object and laid down the course of action to be followed. Kitchener also received a Foreign

* See A. L. Kennedy, *Salisbury 1830–1903* (1953), pp. 284 ff.

Office dispatch, dated 2 August, from Cairo which conveyed the same instructions and continued: 'In dealing with any French or Abyssinian authorities who may be encountered nothing should be said or done which would in any way imply a recognition on behalf of Her Majesty's Government of a title to possession on behalf of France or Abyssinia to any part of the Nile Valley.' Kitchener himself was to proceed up the White Nile to look for Marchand; Hunter was to go up the Blue Nile, and Rundle to remain at Khartoum and maintain touch with Cromer. These orders were at once carried out and Kitchener set forth with five gunboats, a detachment of Cameron Highlanders, two Sudanese battalions and an Egyptian battery. As he neared Fashoda he was met by Marchand, whose boat flew the French flag—but whose force consisted of only eight officers and 120 men. Compliments were exchanged, but no doubt was left in Marchand's mind as to the position. He took the line that he could not withdraw until he received orders to do so; Kitchener replied that he had no option but to hoist the British flag on Marchand's fort. This Marchand could not prevent, but he declined to haul down his own flag; Kitchener raised no objection, and both agreed that, for the rest, the case was one for their superiors to settle. A somewhat strained cordiality was maintained throughout the interviews, and finally Kitchener returned to Khartoum leaving Marchand at Fashoda with his flag still flying, but also with a Sudanese battalion and four guns at hand under command of a British officer flying the Egyptian flag.

Salisbury, whose clear decisive mind had long been fixed irrevocably upon the policy to be pursued, had instructed his Ambassador in Paris in September to inform the French Government that as a result of the final defeat of the Dervishes 'all the territories which were subject to the Khalifa passed by right of conquest to the British and Egyptian Governments. Her Majesty's Government do not consider that this right is open to discussion'. At first M. Delcassé was not disposed to give way and argued strongly that Egypt, which Gladstone had promised to evacuate, was under the vassalage of Turkey; when the authority of the Khedive over the Sudan had ended, that country might be held to have reverted to Turkey, but why should France have to negotiate with England rather than with Turkey or Egypt? Salisbury, in reply,

referred to various anomalies in the French argument and pointed out that the Khedive had recorded his full support of British actions—which he certainly had not done in the case of some earlier encroachments by the French—and that, in any case, whatever the juridical niceties, the right of conquest, strong enough in itself to support the Anglo-Egyptian claim, was made doubly potent by the fact that the Sudan had previously been in the possession of Egypt, and no third-party claim could arise. Though her title had been 'rendered dormant by the military successes of the Mahdi . . . the amount of right, whatever it was, which by those events had been alienated from Egypt, had been entirely transferred to the conqueror'. For some time a complete deadlock was maintained, but in the end Delcassé, realising that the only beneficiary from war with England would be Germany, decided to work for a peaceful settlement. Salisbury was very ready to co-operate in the process of face-saving. By tacit accord Major Marchand the French representative became M. Marchand the gallant explorer and 'an emissary of civilisation' (as, indeed, Delcassé had styled him when congratulating the British Ambassador upon the victory of Omdurman) and the idea that he had ever had an official 'mission' was repudiated. No reference was made to the French auxiliary expedition which was to have joined forces with him on the Nile and failed to get through, and early in November orders were sent from Paris for Marchand to withdraw. The name of 'Fashoda' was replaced by 'Kodok' on the maps. On 21 March, 1899, Great Britain and France agreed formally in a Declaration, which completed the Convention of 1898 regulating 'the boundaries between British and French colonial possessions and spheres of influence to the west and east of the Niger', that the watershed between the basins of the Nile and the Congo should be the boundary between them.

It need hardly be said that the Egyptian Government in later years made much play with the arguments used at this time in support of Egypt's rights and interests in the Sudan.

Chapter 6

The Condominium Agreements of 1899

THE Sudan had been reoccupied. The problem that remained unsolved was what to do with it. Clearly, it could not be left to its own devices, for this would have stultified the whole object of the campaign which had been undertaken and carried through to success; it would have left Egypt again defenceless and in danger, both in respect of the security of her southern border and of her vital water supplies, and have involved every likelihood of a fresh reconquest having to be undertaken at a later stage. Nor were there any native authorities left in the Sudan to whom its administration could be entrusted.

Annexation by Great Britain was also out of the question for several reasons. It would have been an unwarrantably high-handed proceeding, unjustifiable on any reasonable grounds and in obvious conflict with the assurances repeatedly given regarding the rights of Egypt; nor would it have accorded the weight that was due to the part played by Egyptian troops in the re-conquest and the fact that the Egyptian Treasury had borne most of the cost. Moreover, its annexation by Great Britain would certainly have led to a violent recrudescence of trouble with France, who smarted under the enforced withdrawal from Fashoda and had reconciled herself to it only by acceptance of the principle that we were acting primarily as trustee for Egypt and that Egypt and Great Britain were to exercise in partnership the rights conferred by a joint conquest. Nor was there any desire on the part of Her Majesty's Government—or the British Treasury—to saddle themselves with what seemed likely to be a heavy burden. Imperialist and humanitarian motives, it is true, were strong and popular, but the latter could be satisfied without annexation and the former did not extend to the acquisition of vast territories which were expected to be useless, unremunerative and extremely troublesome. The juri-

dical aspect of the matter, too, had to be taken into account, for Egypt was still under Turkish suzerainty.

Another alternative—that of handing over the re-conquered Sudan to Egypt—was open to equally grave objections. Egypt was in no position, administrative or financial, to undertake control of territories stretching from Aswan to the Congo and from Abyssinia to the Chad area. Even if she had been, her record in the Sudan from 1821 to 1885 was one of such appalling misgovernment and inefficiency that any suggestion of subjecting the people of the Sudan to the certain danger of a return to the chaos of the past was ruled out on moral and practical grounds alike. Again, if the political status of the Sudan were assimilated to that of Egypt the corollary would have been the infliction upon it of the burden of what Cromer called 'the cumbersome paraphernalia of internationalism' in the form of the 'capitulations', *i.e.*, the complex system of special privileges, fiscal, political and judicial, which had been granted in the past by the Khedive Isma'il when in financial difficulties, and which the European Powers, Great Britain excepted, insisted on retaining.*

Some form of compromise was obviously called for which would, at one and the same time, satisfy juridical requirements, safeguard Egypt, avoid foreign antagonism and ensure that peace and justice would be brought to the Sudan. This was no easy task, and it was fortunate that at this moment of crisis two towering personalities were at the helm to devise and enforce methods of dealing with it. The august and masterful statesmanship of Salisbury and the ripe wisdom of Cromer formed a unique combination, and in Kitchener, and later Sir Reginald Wingate, they found men well fitted to carry out their policy.

The original suggestion for marking the new status of the Sudan in such a way as to avoid diplomatic complications, by flying the British and Egyptian flags side by side throughout the country, was made by Salisbury in a letter written to Cromer in June, 1898, and accepted after a little hesitation by the latter. This was reasonable enough, but it did not solve the numerous other difficulties that had to be overcome. In the first place, the problem was complicated by the cumbrous machinery which clogged the administration of Egyptian finances. Until 1904 an International Commission

* For the system of capitulations see R.I.I.A., *G.B. and E.*, pp. 42 ff.

of the Public Debt controlled the Treasury and was inclined to use its powers exclusively in the interests of the bond-holders and, too often, for political ends. The British Treasury was equally obstructive, and even less imaginative, on purely 'financial' grounds. In the second place, opposition was anticipated from the Sultan of Turkey, on French and possibly Egyptian instigation, and from King Menelik of Abyssinia, who had shown a disposition, also at French instigation, to press large claims in the eastern parts of the Sudan. Both to Turkey and to Abyssinia it was decided to indicate without any possibility of misunderstanding that the control of the Nile was essentially a matter for British decision. The principle was at the same time logically accepted that Her Majesty's Government should not burden Egypt with the whole of the financial expenditure involved, but bear her own share.

The terms in which the main decision was conveyed to the Egyptian Government on 4 September, 1898, was as follows:

> 'I have the honour to bring to Your Excellency's knowledge that, in view of the substantial military and financial cooperation which has been afforded by Her Majesty's Government to the Government of His Highness the Khedive, Her Majesty's Government have decided that at Khartoum the British and Egyptian flags should be hoisted side by side. This decision will have no reference to the manner in which the occupied countries are to be administered in the future, but the procedure is intended to emphasise the fact that Her Majesty's Government consider that they have a predominant voice in all matters connected with the Sudan, and that they expect that any advice which they may think fit to tender to the Egyptian Government in respect to Sudan affairs will be followed.'

The Sultan, on learning the tenour of this communication, made a somewhat half-hearted protest, but received no answer. The Egyptian Ministry raised no objections.

There also remained the serious question of how to prevent European subjects claiming in the Sudan rights and privileges which they enjoyed in Egypt under the capitulations but which, however appropriate they might be for special reasons in Egypt, were certainly unsuited and inapplicable to

the Sudan, where both common sense and the rights acquired by conquest demanded a political and administrative régime of a simpler kind, very different from that inflicted upon Egypt. In Cromer's words:

> 'It was necessary to invent some method by which the new Sudan should be, at one and the same time, Egyptian to such an extent as to satisfy equitable and political exigencies, and yet sufficiently British to prevent the administration of the country being hampered by the international burr which necessarily hung on to the skirts of Egyptian political existence. It was manifest that these conflicting requirements could not be satisfied without the creation of some hybrid form of government, hitherto unknown to international jurisprudence.' *

The final Agreement to be concluded was prepared in Cairo under Cromer's instructions and with the approval of Her Majesty's Government. It was signed on 19 January, 1899, by him and the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the text is given in the annex at the end of this chapter.

The features calling for particular attention are the following:—†

The title to sovereign rights in the Sudan was based on the indisputable grounds of 'rights of conquest'. The shadowy claims of Turkish suzerainty were ignored. The 22nd parallel of latitude was fixed on the northern frontier: the southern frontier was left undefined. A distinction was drawn between three categories of territory, namely (*a*) that which had never been evacuated by the Egyptian Army since 1882: this covered Halfa and Suakin; (*b*) that temporarily lost to the Dervishes and now reconquered; (*c*) that which might later be reconquered by the two Governments in concert: this wording was intended to include extensions southwards or westwards acquired by Anglo-Egyptian action, but to exclude any extensions from Uganda northwards made by the British acting alone.

Suakin was at first excepted, since an outcry was anticipated on the ground that the jurisdiction of the Mixed Tribunals of Egypt applied to it. Subsequently it was found that

* Cromer, II, 115.

† See memorandum enclosed with Lord Cromer's despatch of 10 November, 1898, to Lord Salisbury and quoted in full by Abbas, p. 161.

this distinction caused practical inconvenience, and by a subsidiary Agreement dated 10 July, 1899, the status of Suakin was assimilated in all respects to that of the rest of the country.

The supreme military and civil command was vested in the Governor-General, who was to be appointed by Khedivial decree on the recommendation of Her Majesty's Government and could be removed only by Khedivial decree with the consent of Her Majesty's Government. This was the same procedure as had been accepted in the case of the nomination of the Commissioners of the Debt. In the pooling of British and Egyptian rights in the person of the Governor-General no reservation was made on behalf of either party; but when Kitchener, on the same day that saw the signature of the Agreement, was appointed as the first Governor-General of the Sudan, he received a formal intimation from Lord Cromer to say that Her Majesty's Government gave the following order to him:—

> 'The Governor-General of the Sudan is to obey whatever instructions he may from time to time receive from Her Britannic Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Cairo, and is to keep the latter fully informed of all important current events connected with the affairs of the Sudan. The main object of the agreement which has been signed between the two Governments concerned is to enable an adequate control to be exercised by Her Majesty's Government, acting in concert with the Khedivial Government, over all important matters connected with the Sudan, whilst at the same time sufficient powers are conferred on the Governor-General to settle all matters of local detail on the spot without reference to Cairo or London. In pursuance of this principle, you should, before issue, submit to Her Britannic Majesty's Agent and Consul-General the draft of all important measures and especially all laws and regulations of general application, which you may propose to enact under the powers conferred upon you by Articles IV, V and VI of the Agreement. You should also refer to Her Britannic Majesty's Agent and Consul-General for instructions in respect to all matters concerning the external relations of the Sudan. I have further to request

that at the close of each year you will address to me a report on the administration of the Sudan for submission to Her Majesty's Government and to the Government of the Khedive.' *

In the eyes of the Sudanese and of the world in general the Governor-General was left absolutely supreme.

The instruction subordinating the Governor-General to the British representative in Cairo may have had no legal force, but it remained fully effective in practice during the time when Cromer was supreme in Egypt. After he retired in 1907, though its main provisions continued to be scrupulously observed, the tendency was for the Consul-General, or High Commissioner as he later became, to take a less active part in the affairs of the Sudan. The precise degree of his interest naturally varied with the personality of the holder of the post.

The main object of Article V was to prevent the Commissioners of the Debt from interference in the finances of the Sudan; that of Article VI to prevent foreigners from claiming rights under the capitulations; that of Article VII to emphasise the right to separate the commercial régime of the Sudan from that of Egypt; that of Article VIII to negative any attempt on the part of the Mixed Tribunals to extend their jurisdiction to the Sudan.

The declaration of martial law (Article IX) was made in order to give the Governor-General full powers during the process of reoccupation, which, it will be realised, could not be completed for some years, to maintain order and, if necessary, expel any individual from the country. Incidentally it strengthened the validity of Article VIII. It did not, of course, imply the absence of the ordinary civil and criminal courts of justice.†

In Article X, again, the distinction is drawn between the political status of Egypt and that of the Sudan, with intent on the part of the British Government to prevent foreign interference.

In Article XI, it is to be noted, only the import and export of slaves are prohibited. The case of domestic slavery was recognised as being on a different footing. It could be tackled

* Quoted by Shibeika, pp. 420, 421.

† Martial law remained in force until 1926, when it was abolished simultaneously with the war-time emergency legislation.

only gradually, for the system permeated the whole country, and any attempt to abolish it by a stroke of the pen would have caused violent upheavals and also have raised a most difficult social problem by creating a vast class of unemployed tending to drift into the urban centres.

Once concluded, the Condominium Agreements stood unchallenged as the constitutional charter of the Sudan, and neither Turkey nor any of the other European Powers disputed their validity. The shadowy rights of Turkey were finally dissolved in 1915 with her entry into the First World War on the side of Germany and the declaration of a British Protectorate over Egypt. In this the Sudan was not specifically mentioned, but by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, Turkey formally relinquished her rights over both Egypt and the Sudan.

So far as Egypt was concerned, it is interesting to note, in the light of later fulminations by Egyptian Ministers and their claim that the Sudan is, and always has been, an integral part of Egypt, the legal effect of an action brought against the Egyptian and Sudan Governments before the Mixed Courts in Cairo *—that is to say, before the international tribunals created in 1875, with the consent of the Khedive on the one side and of the European Powers on the other, and having jurisdiction over all civil cases between Egyptians and Europeans, and Europeans of different nationalities. The plaintiffs were a firm of contractors who sued upon a contract made by the Sudan Government and joined the Egyptian Government on the ground that the Sudan had never ceased to be an integral part of Egypt. The Egyptian Government pleaded that by the Agreements of 1899 the Sudan Government was constituted an autonomous Government absolutely separate and distinct from the Egyptian Government, and that the latter was consequently in no way responsible for the Sudan Government's contractual obligations. The Court upheld this plea and the plaintiffs were non-suited. The Sudan Government pleaded that the jurisdiction of the Mixed Tribunals was excluded from the Sudan by the same Agreements, by virtue of which the Sudan Government was constituted an independent government.

* *Bencini et Quistas contre le Gouvernement Egyptien et le Gouvernement du Soudan* (see *Bulletin de législation et de Jurisprudence Egyptiennes*, 1 December, 1910).

The Court upheld this plea also and found that by the Agreements a new state was established in the Sudan distinct from and independent of Egypt.

A Condominium connotes conjoint sovereignty, but that, according to the jurists,* does not mean that two sovereigns exercise authority over the same territory—which is an impossibility—but that one sovereignty is vested in a body made up of the Governments of the two Powers that exercise the Condominium. Thus the position reached in 1899 may be summed up as follows: Great Britain had accepted responsibility for the guardianship and regeneration of Egypt and been paramount in that country for seventeen years. She had retrieved it from financial and political ruin, and given it an ordered government, an efficient army, peace, justice and prosperity. She had preserved it from the consequences of its own folly and misdeeds and from invasion by the Dervish hordes. By her weight in the councils of Europe she had refuted the claims of others who held that, since the Egyptians had been ejected, the Sudan had become a *res nullius*, to be annexed by the first comer. Finally, with the help of Egyptian men and money, but with the leadership and driving force in her own hands, she had crushed the Dervish power and put herself in a position to effect the regeneration of the Sudan also. She had accepted a virtual trusteeship for the administration of that country and constituted herself a Mandatory Power, though the expression had not at that time been coined. For more than fifty years she has scrupulously carried out her mandate, with all due regard to Egypt's rights and interests, and the history of the Sudan and its progress since 1899 is the record of the fulfilment of that duty.

ANNEX

THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN CONVENTION OF 1899

Agreement between Her Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of His Highness the Khedive of Egypt, relative to the Future Administration of the Sudan.

* *e.g.*, Oppenheim, *International Law* (1928), and Lawrence, *International Law.*

Whereas certain provinces in the Sudan which were in rebellion against the authority of His Highness the Khedive have now been reconquered by the joint military and financial efforts of Her Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of His Highness the Khedive;

And whereas it has become necessary to decide upon a system for the administration of and for the making of laws for the said reconquered provinces, under which due allowance may be made for the backward and unsettled condition of large portions thereof, and for the varying requirements of different localities;

And whereas it is desired to give effect to the claims which have accrued to Her Britannic Majesty's Government, by right of conquest, to share in the present settlement and future working and development of the said system of administration and legislation;

And whereas it is conceived that for many purposes Wadi Halfa and Suakin may be most effectively administered in conjunction with the reconquered provinces to which they are respectively adjacent;

Now, it is hereby agreed and declared by and between the undersigned, duly authorised for that purpose, as follows:—

Article I

The word 'Sudan' in this agreement means all the territories south of the 22nd parallel of latitude, which—

1. Have never been evacuated by Egyptian troops since the year 1882; or

2. Which, having before the late rebellion in the Sudan been administered by the Government of His Highness the Khedive, were temporarily lost to Egypt, and have been reconquered by Her Majesty's Government and the Egyptian Government, acting in concert; or

3. Which may hereafter be reconquered by the two Governments acting in concert.

Article II

The British and Egyptian flags shall be used together, both on land and water, throughout the Sudan [except in the town of Suakin, in which locality the Egyptian flag alone shall be used].*

* The passage in square brackets was cancelled by a subsequent convention concluded on the 10th July, 1899.

Article III

The supreme military and civil command of the Sudan shall be vested in one officer, termed the 'Governor-General of the Sudan'. He shall be appointed by Khedivial Decree on the recommendation of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, and shall be removed only by Khedivial Decree, with the consent of Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

Article IV

Laws, as also orders and regulations with the full force of law, for the good government of the Sudan, and for regulating the holding, disposal, and devolution of property of every kind therein situate, may from time to time be made, altered, or abrogated by Proclamation of the Governor-General. Such laws, orders and regulations may apply to the whole or any named part of the Sudan, and may, either explicitly or by necessary implication, alter or abrogate any existing law or regulation.

All such Proclamations shall be forthwith notified to Her Britannic Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Cairo, and to the President of the Council of Ministers of His Highness the Khedive.

Article V

No Egyptian law, decree, ministerial arreté, or other enactment hereafter to be made or promulgated shall apply to the Sudan or any part thereof, save in so far as the same shall be applied by Proclamation of the Governor-General in manner hereinbefore provided.

Article VI

In the definition by Proclamation of the conditions under which Europeans, of whatever nationality, shall be at liberty to trade with or reside in the Sudan, or to hold property within its limits, no special privileges shall be accorded to the subjects of any one or more Power.

Article VII

Import duties on entering the Sudan shall not be payable on goods coming from Egyptian territory. Such duties may, however, be levied on goods coming from elsewhere than Egyptian territory, but in the case of goods entering the Sudan at Suakin, or any other port on the Red Sea littoral,

they shall not exceed the corresponding duties for the time being leviable on goods entering Egypt from abroad. Duties may be levied on goods leaving the Sudan, at such rates as may from time to time be prescribed by Proclamation.

Article VIII

The jurisdiction of the Mixed Tribunals shall not extend, nor be recognised for any purpose whatsoever, in any part of the Sudan [except in the town of Suakin].*

Article IX

Until, and save so far as it shall be otherwise determined by Proclamation, the Sudan [with the exception of the town of Suakin] * shall be and remain under martial law.

Article X

No consuls, vice-consuls, or consular agents, shall be accredited in respect of nor allowed to reside in the Sudan, without the previous consent of Her Britannic Majesty's Government.

Article XI

The importation of slaves into the Sudan, as also their exportation, is absolutely prohibited. Provision shall be made by Proclamation for the enforcement of this regulation.

Article XII

It is agreed between the two Governments that special attention shall be paid to the enforcement of the Brussels Act of the 2nd July, 1890, in respect to the import, sale, and manufacture of fire-arms and their munitions, and distilled, or spirituous liquors.

Done in Cairo, the 19th January, 1899.

BOUTROS GHALI. CROMER.

* The passages in square brackets were cancelled by a subsequent convention concluded on the 10th July, 1899.

Chapter 7

The First Stones Laid

DR. SHIBEIKA closes his admirable study of British policy in the Sudan during the period antecedent to the inauguration of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium with the words 'The one fact that stands out quite clearly from the study of British policy in the Sudan is that the Sudan question all through was considered as subsidiary to the Egyptian question.' That is essentially true of the period to which it relates, but it would not be an accurate statement in respect of the half-century that followed. The interests of the Sudan itself became paramount, while those of Egypt were at the same time carefully safeguarded; and in this chapter an attempt will be made to outline the principles observed by the new administration, the objective which it set before itself and the methods followed.

The objective can be most simply described as the replacement of the chaos of the past by an orderly system which should give justice to all and lead to the development of the country, social and economic, for the benefit of its inhabitants, without detriment to Egypt. No thought of the emergence of an independent self-governing Sudan was worth entertaining at the beginning of the twentieth century, and Lord Cromer did not permit his speculations regarding the future to go beyond saying that, if and when the new constitution came to an end, to be replaced by 'some more robust, because more real political creation, its authors need not bewail its fate'.*

The state of the Sudan was in every way deplorable. Its population had fallen during the Dervish régime from over 8,500,000 to less than 2,000,000 as a result of famine, disease and internecine warfare. Whole villages had been obliterated, cultivation was at a standstill, flocks and herds had been destroyed, date-palms cut down; slave-raiding was rampant, and there was no security for life or property. Revolts and

* Cromer, II, 119.

savage reprisals had left a legacy of bitter feuds, hatred and suspicion in every district. Little tribal authority survived except among those nomadic tribes, such as the Kababish, which lived in areas inaccessible to the Khalifa's soldiery.

The power of the new Government having been established, the essential task was to restore hope and confidence in the uses to which it was to be put. The horrors through which the country had passed made this less difficult than would have been the case had the transition merely been from one form of ordered government to another. The future could not be anything but preferable to the past, and the obvious intention of the conquerors firmly to insist upon justice and mercy, to substitute construction for destruction, brought a vast relief to all, on whatever side their sympathies had been in the past.

A policy of wholesale decentralisation was accepted as wise and necessary at every level. There was no desire on the part of Lord Cromer to direct the affairs of the Sudan in detail from Cairo, though he paid several visits to Khartoum and exercised a wise and benevolent supervision over the lines of its progress. Similarly, there was no tendency—and little possibility—on the part of the Governor-General and his staff to administer the provinces, into which the country had been divided, from Khartoum, though broad directives were laid down, personal tours of inspection were frequent and every facility was allowed for appeals. Even in the provinces themselves a very wide discretion was left to the scattered band of British Inspectors who found themselves entrusted with the care of huge districts with no trained staff, administrative, technical or clerical, and handicapped by an insufficient knowledge of the languages spoken.

The general line of policy to be followed was laid down by Lord Kitchener in a memorandum to the Governors ('*Mudirs*') of provinces.* It read as follows:

> '1. The absolute uprootal by the Dervishes of the old system of government has afforded an opportunity for initiating a new administration more in harmony with the requirements of the Sudan.
>
> '2. The necessary laws and regulations will be carefully considered and issued as required, but it is not

* A.R., 1899, p. 55.

mainly to the framing and publishing of laws that we must look for the improvement and the good government of the country.

'3. The task before us all, and especially the Mudirs and Inspectors, is to acquire the confidence of the people, to develop their resources, and to raise them to a higher level. This can only be effected by the district officers being thoroughly in touch with the better class of native, through whom we may hope gradually to influence the whole population. Mudirs and Inspectors should learn to know personally all the principal men of the district, and shew them, by friendly dealings and the interest taken in their individual concerns, that our object is to increase their prosperity. Once it is thoroughly realised that our officers have at heart, not only the progress of the country generally, but also the prosperity of each individual with whom they come into contact, their exhortations to industry and improvement will gain redoubled force. Such exhortations, when issued in the shape of proclamations or circulars, effect little; it is to the individual action of British officers, working independently but with a common purpose, on the individual natives whose confidence they have gained that we must look for the moral and industrial regeneration of the Sudan.

'4. The people should be taught that the truth is always expected, and will be equally well received whether pleasant or the reverse. By listening to outspoken opinions, when respectfully expressed, and checking liars and flatterers, we may hope in time to effect some improvement in this respect in the country.

'5. In the administration of justice in your Province you should be very careful to see that legal forms as laid down are strictly adhered to, so that the appointed courts may be thoroughly respected; and you should endeavour, by the careful enquiry given by your courts to the cases brought before them, to inspire the people with absolute confidence that real justice is being meted out to them. It is very important that the Government should do nothing which could be interpreted as a sign of weakness, and all insubordination must be promptly and severely repressed. At the same time, a paternal spirit of correction for offences should be your aim in your relation

with the people, and clemency should be shewn in dealing with first offences, especially when such may be the result of ignorance or are openly acknowledged. In the latter case, they should be more than half pardoned in order to induce truthfulness.

'6. Be careful to see that religious feelings are not in any way interfered with, and that the Mahomedan religion is respected.

'7. Mosques in the principal towns will be rebuilt, but private mosques, *takias*, *zawiyas*, sheikhs' tombs, etc., cannot be allowed to be re-established as they generally formed centres of unorthodox fanaticism. Any requests for permission on such subjects must be referred to the central authority.

'8. Slavery is not recognised in the Sudan, but as long as service is willingly rendered by servants to masters it is unnecessary to interfere in the conditions existing between them. Where, however, any individual is subjected to cruel treatment, and his or her liberty interfered with, the accused can be tried on such charges, which are offences against the law, and in serious cases of cruelty the severest sentences should be imposed.'

The officers to whom fell the practical day-by-day carrying out of this instruction were men of multifarious activities. Touring their huge districts on camel or horseback, by canoe or on foot, with a few locally recruited policemen, there was nothing which they might not be called upon to deal with, from magisterial work to map-making, from boundary disputes to bone-setting, from runaway slaves to road-cutting, from crime to charity. They had few opportunities or means of referring to a superior officer for instruction and carried on confidently with their work in the light of common sense. All of them, Governors and Inspectors alike, were, in the first instance, British officers attached to the Egyptian Army, and under them, in charge of routine work, were Egyptian officers of lesser rank as *mamurs* and *sub-mamurs*; but, at a very early stage, steps were taken to recruit each year, by personal selection, a few young British civilians from the Universities—'active young men', Cromer calls them, 'endowed with good health, high character, and fair abilities'—to form the nucleus of a permanent Civil Service and gradually replace the sol-

diers.* This would, of course, have been a logical development of the establishment of civil administration in any case, but it was made the more necessary by the fact that military officers were always liable to be withdrawn by the War Office for service at home or elsewhere. In fact it was the outbreak of the Boer War that compelled the severance of Lord Kitchener's own connection with the Sudan in December, 1899, and the succession of Sir Reginald Wingate. The debt of the Sudan to those early pioneers, the officers of the Egyptian Army, as its first administrators, is indeed a great one. They carried out their task by force of personality and the exercise of practical common sense flavoured with sympathy and a sense of humour, and no finer instruments for dealing with the variegated problems of the day could have been found. At Khartoum itself in this early period the Governor-General, who was also Sirdar (Commander-in-Chief) of the Egyptian Army, had the assistance of a few highly qualified advisers to organise judicial and legislative systems, education, medical work, finance, land-tenure and the rest, and technical experts for the construction and maintenance of railways, houses and steamers. Among his advisers the most remarkable and romantic figure was Slatin. This gallant Austrian had originally come to the Sudan as an explorer in 1874 and joined the service of the Khedive in 1879. At the time of the Mahdi's rebellion he was Governor of Darfur and was forced to surrender and adopt Islam. Agents sent by Wingate enabled him to escape from Omdurman in 1895 and, after a most hazardous journey on relays of camels, he reached Aswan and placed his services at the disposal of the British forces. With them he returned three years later, and in 1901 received a British knighthood and was made Inspector-General. As such he was Wingate's chief adviser on all native affairs, and his intimate knowledge of the country and its personalities was invaluable.

The wide scope of his functions is evidenced by a document which he drafted in his own hand early in 1902 and which is in the possession of the writer: the corrections and additions are in Wingate's hand and are bracketed in italics :

* Six were brought out in 1901 and by the beginning of 1905 there were fifteen. By 1933 the number had risen to 140 in addition to twenty-six serving on contract. By 1909 there was one civilian Governor, by 1912 two, by the time of the outbreak of the First World War, five. The service, in time, came to be styled 'The Sudan Political Service'.

'Duties of Inspector General Sudan.

'I. To act as Adviser generally to H.E. the Gov. Gen. on all matters concerning his duties.

'II. To acquaint himself fully with the Laws Ordinances and Orders of the Sudan Government and to make any remarks on them to the Gov. Gen. that he considers advisable.

'III. To acquire full information regarding the general situation in the whole of the Sudan, and to travel through such districts as require special inspection. The Mudir, in whose province the district lies, should be informed beforehand of the proposed inspection.

'IV. To acquaint himself with the names and characters of the principal sheikhs and other persons, who either through their wealth or position or for reasons connected with religion, have influence over the natives.

'V. To make enquiries regarding the behaviour of the officers and employees in the Civil Government (*and the manner in which they perform their duties*) and their relations to the population (*and to acquaint the Mudir if he considers their conduct is in any way at fault. On receipt of such communication the Mudir will make the necessary investigations and inform I.G. of the result.*)

'VI. To give his opinion upon legal cases involving (*native*) religious or (*native*) political matters. Such cases should be shown to him by the Legal Secretary before a decision has been come to.

'VII. To be in touch with the Board of Ulemas and the principal religious leaders and to report to H.E. the Gov. Gen. their views complaints and actions.

'VIII. To lay before the Governor General any proposal which in his opinion would improve the state of affairs in the Sudan.

'IX. He will not issue direct orders to any employee under a Mudir, except in case of absolute urgency when the Mudir is too far away to issue orders in time. The Mudir should be informed as soon as possible of any such orders given.

'X. After every inspection he will forward a report to the Governor General, a copy of which will be sent to the Mudir of the Province in question for his information.

'XI. To give his opinion to the C.S.* or Gov. Gen. as the case may be in (*matters of*) taxation and specially on all questions connected with nomad Arab tribes.

'XII. Whenever possible to examine and remark upon the Intelligence Report before it is submitted to the Sirdar and Gov. Gen.

'To assist him in the above duties all Government officials will supply him with any information in their possession that he may call for.'

It is understandable that all *Mudirs* did not welcome the institution of the kind of supervision implied in these orders, but by all who worked with him and experienced his infinite understanding, kindness and tact, Slatin was respected and beloved. By the Sudanese themselves 'Salatin' was regarded with mixed feelings: some had reason to regard him with fear and awe; others found in him one whose intimate knowledge and experience could be invoked for the redressing of wrongs.†

Of Wingate himself it may be said that he was not only a brilliant administrator who guided the affairs of the Sudan for sixteen years, from its childhood to adolescence, with supreme skill and wisdom, but also a born Intelligence Officer. He had himself been Director of Intelligence to Kitchener during the advance to Khartoum; the instructions to Slatin printed above bear unmistakable marks of the same calling, and the successor whom he chose, when he was translated to Cairo as High Commissioner for Egypt, was Sir Lee Stack, who had at one time been Director of Intelligence to himself.

Let us turn now to the tasks facing the new administration in other fields, and make mention of the general principles adopted and the first steps taken, leaving the account of later developments to follow in subsequent chapters.

As ever, the first problem arising, after the purely military phase had ended, was that of finance. The simple fact of the matter was that no appreciable revenue was to be foreseen,

* *i.e.*, Civil Secretary, who was largely concerned with personal matters, but was also in the early years Deputy Governor-General.

† Slatin was on leave in Europe when war broke out in 1914 and being technically an 'enemy alien' could not return to the Sudan. Instead, he busied himself with work for the Red Cross in Austria and was instrumental in arranging exchanges of prisoners. After the war he paid frequent visits to old friends in England. He died in 1932.

whereas expenditure was inevitable. For 1898 the former was estimated at £E8,000 and the latter at £E221,000. Actually a revenue of £E35,000 was collected and £E235,000 spent, and by 1902 these figures had risen to £E270,226 and £E516,945 respectively. The deficit in each year had to be met from the Egyptian Treasury, and consequently control from Egypt was called for. To this matter Lord Cromer gave close personal attention, and it was laid down strictly that the total granted yearly by the Egyptian Council of Ministers must not be exceeded, and that any special or unforeseen expenditure beyond the means of the Sudan Government must be the subject of application for a special grant and the approval of that body. The Egyptian Minister of Finance, advised by the British Financial Adviser to the Egyptian Government, had the right of supervision, audit and inspection, of all the finances of the Sudan, and the Audit Department was retained in Cairo.

A mild system of taxation had to be devised and put into force, and Cromer laid down two cardinal precepts, namely that 'low taxation should be the keystone of the political arch: it brings tranquility in its train',* and that 'in the assessment and collection of taxes, no innovation based on western ideas should be introduced unless its introduction is altogether unavoidable'.† Luckily, it was found that, though the methods of collecting taxes in the Dervish days had been harsh and cruel in the extreme, they were based on principles commonly accepted by Moslems in all countries. All that was needed, therefore, was to fix moderate rates by law and ensure that they were not exceeded and that undue rigour was not exercised in their collection. In the first instance a land-tax and a tax on date trees, being familiar in the riverain areas of the north, were chiefly relied upon, but as the inland districts came under control it was found that a herd tax for the settled villagers and a tribute for the nomad tribes was more practicable and productive of revenue.

The question of landownership, urban and rural, had also to be tackled in the riverain districts of the north. In the spacious rainlands of the interior and in the south no particular action under this head was required for years to come: land there was more than ample for the needs of the population and most of it was in tribal or village communal owner-

* A.R., 1904, p. 16. † Cromer, II, 550.

ship, so that such quarrels as arose between individuals could be settled with comparative ease, and without much animosity, by local headmen, while inter-tribal and inter-village disputes could be dealt with administratively by the British staff of the provinces. On the river, in the northern Sudan, where cultivation was strictly limited by the availability of water from the Nile, and where the density of the population and its degree of sophistication had been greater, the case was very different, and the rights of individuals to strips of land running back from the river, or to fertile 'islands' which appeared at low Nile, and even to poor patches farther inland which occasionally received enough rain to raise a little corn, were bitterly contested to the point of bloodshed. It was here that land-settlement was urgently needed, partly because of the trouble caused by uncertainty, but more particularly because large-scale development by artificial irrigation was foreseen as practicable, and it could not be undertaken without prior adjudication of ownership and other rights.

The principles adopted for general application were to recognise *de facto* rights and settle as many natives as possible upon the land with secure titles, except when it was required for public purposes, and to discourage land speculation by foreigners. It was also made clear that land in which private ownership was not proved was the property of the Government, though it might, of course, be subject to village or individual rights of cultivation or grazing. This was in entire conformity with native usage, which held that '*el'ard ,'ard el hukuma*' ('the land is the land of the Government'). Furthermore, a proclamation made in 1905 forbade any native to sell, mortgage or charge, or dispose of his land without the written consent of the Governor of the province in which the land lay, and so did much to prevent the improvident peasant from selling the whole of his heritage and to secure for him a fair price if he wished to sell a part.*

The first step to be taken was the registration of titles, and a number of land-settlement commissions were appointed in the northern districts. This, as can be well understood in view of the general displacement of owners which had occurred, involved an immense amount of detailed work in

* More recent amendments permit the Governor to delegate his powers of consent to local administrative authorities and give certain rights of pre-emption to co-owners and adjoining owners.

travelling, mapping and, above all, the hearing of interminable disputes between excited rivals with claims of the most vague, variegated and discrepant types, ranging from ancient grants recorded on torn scraps of paper and doubtful decisions of defunct authorities to long possession and inheritance. Matters were, however, to some extent simplified by acceptance of the rule that five years' continuous possession at the date of claim conferred an absolute title as against all persons. The most important and the most arduous of the settlements to be made was that in the Gezira area, where cotton was to be grown. An account of this scheme will be given in a later chapter.

In the administrative field, as has been mentioned, decentralisation was the keynote of policy. It extended not only to the governmental staff but also beyond them. The nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes had in many cases retained their ancestral heads and were content to leave them in power; others lost no time in rejecting men who had misused their authority or whom they regarded as usurpers. The Government was, generally speaking, content enough to accept the choice of the people in this matter and prepared to adjudicate in cases of doubt. It played a similar part in the case of village sheikhs, a class among which the number of disputes between rival claimants was in inverse ratio to their importance. The heads of tribes and village communities, once established and recognised by government, were perforce left to manage their own affairs in customary manner, so long as they cooperated in keeping the peace, composing disputes among their people and collecting the taxes. Here again, in the north, there was a marked difference between the riverain districts and the hinterland. In the latter there was strong competition for the post of sheikh, which carried with it a greater degree of authority and a number of customary perquisites; in the former there was more work, closer supervision and practically no perquisites at all. Theoretically, the Government exercised direct control over the individual, but in practice it was, of course, largely inoperative. This in fact was fortunate, for otherwise the process of 'native administration', which came into full force at a later stage, would have been robbed of its foundations. The extreme instance of this involuntary devolution of power was that of Darfur, the most westerly province of the Sudan and almost the size of

Spain. Here the hereditary Sultan, 'Ali Dinar, who had hurried westwards as soon as he heard of the Khalifa's defeat, outpacing a dilatory rival sent by Kitchener after the battle of the Atbara to occupy the throne, seized the ancient capital of El Fasher from the Dervishes, ejected the rival and established himself in power. The Governor-General recognised him officially in 1900 and was well content to leave him in completely unfettered charge. Relations of stiff correctitude rather than cordiality were maintained, and the Sultan paid a small tribute annually and exchanged presents with the Governor-General; but it became increasingly clearer each year that no official of the Government would be allowed to visit Darfur and that any European who did so would be unlikely to return. This state of affairs lasted for sixteen years.*

At the other end of the scale were the townships and the riverain villages of the northern Sudan, which were easily accessible and had suffered most severely during the Khalifa's rule. Here direct administration was practicable, and the more desirable in the absence at this period of any recognised local authority of weight.

The great Nilotic tribes of the southern provinces presented an altogether different picture. They had been harried and decimated by the Dervishes, as by the 'Turks' before them, and were in a state of turbulence and suspicion. More backward in every respect than the 'Arabs', and more distrustful of the new Government, they tended to withdraw beyond its reach into the fastnesses of swamps, caves or forests, as the case might be, to raid each other's cattle in the ancient manner and offer violent resistance to any form of control. A few Government posts were, however, established, and, notwithstanding all handicaps and dangers, representatives of various Christian missions, which had been represented in these regions before the *Mahdia*, and some of whom had even suffered captivity in Omdurman, resumed work on such modest scale as they could afford, providing medical attention and a modicum of elementary education for long before the Government could provide services of its own.

Civil and Criminal Courts of Justice were established at the earliest possible moment. A penal code was introduced in 1899 and a code of criminal procedure in 1900, both modelled on Indian codes but with simplifications and modifications;

* For the events of 1916 see Chap. 8.

also in 1900 a civil justice ordinance. They were at once used in the northern provinces, but had little application in the south for many years to come. Serious crimes were tried by Major Courts composed of the local governor and two members; lesser crimes by Minor Courts, or by an officer sitting alone with powers which were summary or not, according to the nature of the offence and the punishment which could be awarded. The same principle applied to the Civil Courts. For all major cases an appellate authority was provided, and a death sentence required the confirmation of the Governor-General.

For the administration of Mohammedan personal law, which deals with marriage, divorce, inheritance, etc., Religious Courts were set up side by side with the Civil Courts of the Government at Khartoum and in all provincial and district centres.

Education also received an early start. All that had existed in the country, except for very small primary schools at Halfa and Suakin for the children of Egyptian employees, were a number of little *kuran* schools in which the simplest tenets of Islam were taught parrot-wise in the crudest of conditions. These were not interfered with, but obviously they provided nothing in the way of foundation, and little could be done for them beyond giving simple courses of instruction for more promising teachers, inspection and the grant of modest subsidies. The immediate need—hampered though it was by financial stringency—was to obtain a supply of young men able to occupy subordinate places in the administration, or, in the words of Mr. Currie,* the first Director of Education, written in 1900:

> '(i) by the provision of vernacular schools to diffuse elementary education among the masses in measure sufficient to enable them to understand the elements of the system of government;
>
> '(ii) by the creation of a technical school to train a small class of competent artisans, hitherto lacking; and
>
> '(iii) by the beginning of primary schools with classes for the training of elementary schoolmasters, to produce a small administrative class for entry to the government service.'

* Later Sir James Currie. He retired in 1914.

A small primary school and a small training centre for primary school teachers were opened at Omdurman in 1900, and a few others elsewhere, but a more spectacular achievement was the opening in November, 1902, of the Gordon College as a primary school. By the end of 1902 it contained ninety-one Sudanese and fifty-eight Egyptians and Syrians, and the numbers increased rapidly with each year that followed. It had been one of Kitchener's first acts—only two months after the Battle of Omdurman—to appeal in Great Britain for £100,000 for a college in the name and memory of Gordon. Funds were at once forthcoming, subscriptions eventually reached £135,000, and a committee was formed in London to administer them. A research laboratory and instructional workshops were presented by the munificence of Mr. Wellcome and Sir William Mather.

For the rest of the country no more than a series of elementary and primary schools could as yet be found. In the pagan south education was perforce left to the missions, American Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and Anglican.

A system of communications had also to be provided, both for military and economic purposes. The Halfa–Abu Hamed line laid by the advancing troops across the desert was carried forward to Halfaya (Khartoum North) by the end of 1899 and plans were prepared for the replacement, when funds permitted, of the old Berber-to-Suakin caravan route by a railway from Atbara to the Red Sea coast in order to give the Sudan a more economic outlet for its commerce. Suakin itself was found to be inadequate for large steamers, and the building of an entirely new harbour at Port Sudan was decided upon. Work on this was begun in 1904, and the line was opened in 1905. By the end of the same year nearly 4,000 miles of telegraph line had also been put into use, largely for the purpose of keeping contact with outlying military stations. Roads remained an unattainable luxury.

The problem of the *sudd*,* which blocked the White Nile and the Bahr el Ghazal rivers, was equally urgent, for until a passage could be cleared and kept open communications with the south were cut off. Expeditions were sent in 1899 and each following year to locate main channels, open them for navigation and establish touch with military posts and with Uganda and the Lado. The task was a herculean one, carried

* See Chap. 1.

out with unremitting determination in the face of unceasing danger to life and health. By the end of 1903 the rivers had been cleared to Rejaf and Wau, and the task of keeping them open has never ceased.

Of the programme of building houses and offices no more need be said than that work started in 1899 with the rebuilding of Gordon's Palace at Khartoum, and by the end of 1901 this was complete together with Government offices, British barracks, two banks and a mosque. For houses during the first few years officials had mostly to make shift with what native buildings they could find, until something better could be provided in the larger centres by the Public Works Department and by native labour elsewhere.

The settlement of the boundaries of the Sudan presented no insuperable obstacles. That with Uganda had been provisionally * settled; that with Egypt was fixed by the Condominium Agreement of January, 1899; the western boundary of Darfur was inaccessible but theoretically covered by the Anglo-French Agreement of March, 1899.† The settlement and delimitation of the eastern boundary had begun in 1898 and the results were embodied in a series of formal agreements.‡ Of these the most important was that of 1902 whereby the Emperor Menelik of Abyssinia engaged 'not to construct, or allow to be constructed, any work across the Blue Nile, Lake Tana, or the Sobat, which would arrest the flow of their waters into the Nile except in agreement with His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of the Sudan', and also leased a station at Gambeila on the Baro River in Abyssinia to the Sudan Government 'to be administered and occupied as a commercial station'. The line of the boundary with Abyssinia has never, however, been a satisfactory one. Between latitudes 10° and 11° lay the troublesome Beni Shangul district, which had been ceded by the Khalifa in 1897 to Abyssinia but should on ethnical and historical grounds have belonged to the Sudan. To the south of latitude 9° the boundary is a 'surveyor's' boundary, easily traced by following the courses of rivers, but administratively

* Exchanges effected between the Sudan and Uganda in 1914 had the effect of giving the Sudan an extension southwards on the White Nile to Nimule while Uganda received a part of the Lado Enclave (R.I.I.A., *Survey, 1925*, I, 232.

† See p. 61.

‡ See R.I.I.A. *Survey, 1925*, I, 233.

unsound because each bank of these rivers is used for the grazing of cattle by the same Nilotic tribes at a different season of the year: what Nature has made a factor of unity, man has made a factor of division. Farther south again, beyond the Boma plateau, whatever the theoretical line of division might be, the one certain factor was that the pastoral tribes, whether owing a nominal allegiance to Abyssinia, Kenya or the Sudan, would ignore it.

The great problems of irrigation which loom so large were too remote to concern the Government of the Sudan for the first few years after the reconquest. They were, however, very much in the mind of Egypt, and the same year, 1902, that saw the completion of the Aswan Dam also saw the start of expeditions sent by the Egyptian Irrigation Department to Lake Tana and the Equatorial Lakes.*

As a natural result of these and the studies carried out by the eminent band of British engineers employed by the Government of Egypt, interest in the whole subject was vastly stimulated in that country and increased yearly as the potentialities of Nile control both in Egypt and the Sudan became more and more evident. With this increase of enthusiasm there also grew the fear that the Sudan itself might wish to take water from the river at the expense of Egypt. The anticipation remained groundless so long as Egypt and the Sudan were under British control and the prior rights of the former were fully recognised, as indeed they were; but we shall see the bogey growing with the years, until now, with full independence for the Sudan in sight and British control removed from both countries, it has assumed a definite reality.

* See Chap. 11.

PART TWO

CONSTRUCTION

Chapter 8

Pacification

THE story of the pacification of the Sudan and the part which the country played in two World Wars is perhaps best dealt with as a whole and separately both from economic and social development and from political problems. Few of the incidents recounted will find a place in the history books, with the exception of the major operations undertaken in the war years, but the general picture would be incomplete without some allusion to them, for the story of the Sudan is not merely one of peaceful development and political argumentation, but of the establishment and maintenance of the conditions of security which have provided the opportunity for both.

The task was a gradual one, and until 1925 was carried out by the Egyptian Army, the senior officers of which were all British, and the junior Egyptians and Sudanese. The obstacles to be overcome were largely the climate and lack of communications; the occasions were usually outbursts of fanaticism on the part of 'holy men' and witch doctors, inter-tribal feuds, frontier raiding and resistance to authority in general. Trouble of these kinds was frequent and cost many lives, but never was there any general or concerted resistance to the Government on the part of the Sudanese as a whole, or even throughout any single province. Incidents of the religious fanatic variety usually occurred in the broad, well-populated central belt of the country where conditions were for long only partially settled; frontier raiding was confined to the eastern border, and still is so.

The Nuba mountains in southern Kordofan presented a specialised problem. Many of the groups of hills, inhabited by negroids of the most ancient and primitive stock, speaking different languages and having customs of which the only common characteristic was that of raiding each other and shooting would-be tax-gatherers, or traders, with ancient Remingtons captured during the Dervish period and home-made

ammunition, had never been subdued by the old 'Turkish' régime or the Khalifa. Their denizens were a wild and sturdy folk, keeping small herds of poor cattle and going to ground in deep caves when approached. It was necessary to bring them to heel sooner or later, and the first to be tackled was the nearest, the people of Gebel Daier, lying within sight of El Obeid. This was stormed in 1904. Posts were established at a few other accessible points, and one of these, at Talodi in the south, was the scene of a serious incident in 1906, when a *mamur*, an officer and thirty-eight men of a Sudanese battalion were murdered at a native dance and the cantonment invested. Friendly Nuba from other hills brought relief, until troops arrived and stamped out the revolt. Nyima was occupied in 1908; Katla Kiddu in 1909; Tagoi and others in 1910 and 1911. Many of the Nuba captured were recruited into Sudanese battalions, and became stout soldiers.

Little attempt could be made for several years to subdue or tax the marsh-dwelling Nilotic tribes, and inter-tribal raiding remained so prevalent that large-scale action eventually became necessary against Dinka, Nuer, Anuak and Beir alike. This was carried out in the four years 1910–13, and an expedition against the Anuak in 1912 cost the lives of two British and three Sudanese officers and forty-two men. The year 1910 also saw the occupation of the Soda hills in the south of the Fung Province.

An Equatorial battalion of five companies was recruited in 1912 and 1913 from Mongalla and the Bahr el Ghazal for local service.

In 1914, before the outbreak of the war, there was trouble in several quarters. Brigands were active on the Abyssinian border and the officer commanding the Arab battalion was killed in action against them; patrols had to be sent against the Nuer in the south, and three more of the Nuba mountains (Tira el Akhdar, Sabai and Mandal) defied the Government and had to be subdued. A fourth, Miri, offered longer resistance, and was not taken until late in 1915.

In 1916 and 1917 patrols were active in the south and against the Tabi hills in the Fung Province. Gebel Nyima also revolted again and was not fully re-occupied until 1918. In that year, too, the Dinka of the Bahr el Ghazal had to be repressed and another force sent against a religious fanatic who had tried to storm the fort at Kassala.

These various operations were, of course, entirely unconnected with the World War except in so far as they engaged the services of British officers who might otherwise have been spared. Indeed, the outbreak of the War caused no particular excitement, even in the more sophisticated areas, among the Sudanese, who had little idea of the issues at stake. 1913 had been a year of poor rainfall and low Nile. The riverain provinces of the north had suffered severely and a widespread famine had been averted only by the Government importing corn from India. The psychological effects of this were as potent as the economic, and with the certain prospects of good crops in 1914 the population was by August, 1914, in a state of goodwill. There were, of course, certain questions to puzzle the intelligentsia: Great Britain was in control of Egypt and at war with Turkey, the Sultan of which was Caliph of Islam and suzerain of Egypt: what was the position of the Egyptians and of good Mohammedans? At a later period the question would, no doubt, have been exploited to the full. As things were, it presented little more than a field for interesting speculation, and the constitutional issue was settled by the declaration in December, 1914, of a British Protectorate over Egypt, the deposition of the Khedive 'Abbas Hilmi, who had 'adhered to the King's enemies', his replacement by Hussein Kamil with the title of Sultan of Egypt, and the formal acceptance of responsibility for the safety of Egypt and its nationals by His Majesty's Government.

The religious issue never became acute, for the Sherif of Mecca took the opportunity to disclaim allegiance to Turkey and invade the Turkish provinces. To the Sudanese, who had many links with Arabia and none with Turkey, the precedent was sufficiently satisfying. Moreover the war was bringing prosperity to the country, for there were bumper harvests following the famine of 1913; an unprecedented demand arose for Sudan products in Egypt and Palestine, and the export trade in camels, sheep and cattle throve exceedingly. In the last two years of the war the output of food products was doubled; the cotton crop was bought wholesale in England at high prices, and revenue increased by over £1,000,000.

On the other side of the picture there were disquieting factors. Enemy propaganda was to be expected and distorted rumours of disaster to British arms. It will be remembered, too, that most of the British staff, whether performing civil or

military duties, were officers seconded from the British Army or on the reserve of officers, and such were needed in every theatre of the war and were ready to move heaven and earth to join their old regiments. A few were allowed to do so and, in addition, several units of the Egyptian Army in the Sudan were sent to various theatres of the war and shared in the defence of the Suez Canal and Sinai and in the Senussi campaign. A works battalion was sent to the Dardanelles in 1915 and a transport corps to Palestine in 1917–18; stores, hospitals and ordnance departments were placed at the disposal of the expeditionary troops operating from Egypt.* But on the wholesale release of British officers and civilians a veto was imposed on the ground that the release of a comparatively small number of individuals who were carrying out vital duties in conditions with which they were familiar could have no effect on the war comparable with the chaos which their departure would cause and its effect on the stability of the Middle East. If the Sudan was not to be abandoned, it must be held and administered, and local troubles, of which there were plenty, had to be met.

This policy was justified in 1915 when 'Ali Dinar, the hereditary Sultan of Darfur,† which had hitherto been untouched by the hand of government, decided to revolt. In 1909 the French had occupied Wadai, to the west of Darfur, and claimed the buffer states of Dar Tama, Dar Sula, Dar Gimr and Dar Masalit—a claim violently resented by the Sultan and disputed by the British and Sudanese governments. The buffer states, for their part, declared themselves independent of either contestant, and the Masalit in 1910 had massacred two French forces in turn. The Sultan bore no goodwill to the French and saw no reason for continuing to pay allegiance to his other neighbours, their allies. His line had been independent sovereigns for more than 300 years and he himself had built up during the last fifteen years a highly efficient and well-organised, but ruthless, dictatorship and formed a strong and reliable army on *mameluke* lines. Enemy propaganda entering Darfur from the north via Kufra,‡ and the flattery of traders from the east combined to persuade him

* See Sir Charles Lucas, *The Empire at War*, Vol. IV, part 6.

† See p. 83.

‡ Enver Pasha and his brother Nuri, who commanded the Senussi's army, were responsible for this.

that his opportunity had come to assert himself as a champion of the faith and extend his dominion over tracts which had been ruled by his ancestors before the coming of the 'Turks'. His intention was to invade Kordofan during or after the rainy season, when the movement of infantry and horsemen over the intervening deserts was possible, and had he been allowed to do so the danger to the Sudan would have been great, for the Baggara, who had formed the backbone of the Khalifa's armies, would probably have chosen to join him rather than be crushed. His plans could not be put into effect during 1915 because of various troubles which had first to be disposed of in the south and west of Darfur; so he contented himself for that year with sending threatening letters to Khartoum and completing his preparations.

The Sirdar realised that the danger from Darfur could be averted only by taking the initiative and invading it before the rains fell. This involved an enterprise of major proportions, for between railhead at El Obeid and El Fasher lay 400 miles of heavy sand and scrub with few wells. By March, 1916, a force of 2,000–3,000 troops had been mustered in western Kordofan. It consisted of Sudanese and Arab infantry, the camel corps commanded by Major Huddleston—who, twenty-four years later, was to become Governor-General—mounted infantry, a few Egyptian artillery-men and a small contingent of British gunners with four maxims. As the force moved slowly forward in square formation under a blazing sun from well to distant well the Sultan made no attempt to stop them. He remembered, no doubt, the success of the Mahdi's tactics against Hicks pressing forward into Kordofan in 1883, and preferred to draw the Sirdar's troops far away from their base and annihilate them on ground of his own choosing. He very nearly succeeded. On 22 May the Egyptian Army had reached a point twelve miles from El Fasher when suddenly from lines of well-concealed trenches a Fur army of about 4,000 men burst forth and fell upon the southern front of the square. For forty minutes charge followed charge, but steadiness won the day and the Fur fell back with the loss of some 400 men. The Sultan himself had kept in the background, and when El Fasher was occupied the next day it was found he had fled to the south-west. For some months no attempt was made to follow him, and a number of his chief adherents, seeing that his day was over, came in to offer their

allegiance to the new régime. They served it as faithfully as they had served their old master, and their value as peace-makers and arbitrators of disputes was very considerable.

In November a force commanded by Huddleston surprised the Sultan to the south-west of Gebel Marra and a chance bullet ended his career. By the close of 1916 the pacification of Darfur was practically complete. This brought up the question of the western boundary and the buffer states, and it was not until 1919 that a convention was signed in Paris, as an incidental part of the proceedings of the Peace Conference, whereby Masalit and Gimr were to be incorporated in the Sudanese sphere and Tama and Sula in the French. The delimitation of the boundary on the ground caused even greater difficulties, for every inch was contested, and it was only in January, 1924, that a protocol * was signed defining the frontier along the whole of its length.

Only one outbreak of serious trouble occurred in Darfur after 1916. Five years later a religious fanatic raised the banner of revolt at Nyala, fell upon the first reinforcements sent and swept through the defences of the post, killing the British Inspector, the Veterinary officer and forty Sudanese. Two Sudanese officers heroically rallied the survivors and beat off the enemy. The next day more reinforcements arrived, and the 'holy man', who was brought in by friendlies soon afterwards, was hanged.

In 1919 the Sudan experienced a fresh crop of local troubles. A 'prophet' declared himself in the Fung province and had to be suppressed; the Aliab Dinka became aggressive in the Bahr el Ghazal and ambushed and killed the Governor (Major Stigand), the officer commanding a patrol, a Sudanese officer and twenty-four men. In 1921 patrols were sent to the Dinka country; in 1922 to the Dodinga hills on the Uganda border, the Tabi hills of the Fung and the Nuba Gebel, Tira el Akhdar; in 1923 to the Lake No area and again to the Nuba mountains; in 1924 to the west bank of the Bahr el Gebel and to the Burun country in the Daga valley, where posts were established as protection against Abyssinian raiders.

These raiders have never ceased their activities. Between 1916 and 1927 there were forty-one incursions into Kassala and the Fung provinces and twenty-three into Mongalla, in addition to organised slave-raiding and arms-running all

* *Cmd.* 2221.

along the border, and the Abyssinian authorities did nothing to check it.* The Toposa, hitherto engaged in incessant warfare with the Turkana of Kenya, were brought under control in 1926, and the pacification of the Nuba mountains was completed with the suppression of Gulud in 1925 and Eliri in 1929.

Far away to the north-west raids by wild Bedayat and Gura'an upon the camel-owning nomads of Dongola and Kordofan also called for action between 1926 and 1931, but motor machine-gun batteries and aeroplanes alike could achieve little in these trackless wastes of desert.

In 1927 and 1928 a really serious attempt was made to deal with the Nuer of the Upper Nile. Living in almost impenetrable marshes, armed with rifles smuggled in from Abyssinia, defiant and incorrigible, they had continued to steal cattle from other tribes, cutting telegraph lines, murdering linesmen and attacking police posts. To deal with such incidents piecemeal was useless and when, late in 1927, a local witch-doctor raised a revolt in the east and the Nuong section in the west murdered Captain Fergusson, the District Commissioner, a Greek merchant and sixteen Dinka, the decision was taken to make a clean sweep of the problem. Early in 1928 the stronghold of the witch-doctor was destroyed and the western Nuer were dislodged from their swamps by air action and surrendered. Soon afterwards the Gaweir section on the Zeraf river was also repressed. But it was recognised that if pacification was to be lasting the old procedure of punitive patrol, evacuation, punitive patrol *ad infinitum*, was not enough. A programme of 'Nuer settlement' was therefore undertaken. Troops were sent to focal points, but the essence of the plan lay in constructing roads, creating neutral zones between rival tribes, strengthening the authority of the chiefs and providing medical treatment. The work progressed over the years 1928–30, and was eventually so successful that in recent years the earlier methods have been replaced by periodic meetings held by the Civil Secretary in the Nuer country to settle disputes and discuss such things as medical and educational work with area councils.† That is not to

* A British consulate was opened at Maji in south-west Abyssinia in 1921, financed by the British, Sudan and Kenya governments; but a single British officer and a few native police could do little in the face of Abyssinian obstruction, lack of communications, inter-tribal warfare and uncertainty as to the location of the frontiers.

† See A.R., 1949, p. 214.

say that peace and order reign supreme, but such disputes as arise can generally be dealt with by the local authorities.

Interior security remained normal in the years preceding the Second World War and after it, but for the everlasting activities of brigands, arms-smugglers and poachers all along the Abyssinian frontier.

That the work of pacification throughout the Sudan had been effective and left no feelings of resentment was evidenced triumphantly during the Second World War. So far from any advantage being taken of British difficulties, the fullest and most loyal support was given. Italy, now in course of trying to consolidate her newly won power in Abyssinia and Eritrea, planned to crush Egypt and the Sudan between the northern pincer of Cyrenaica and the southern pincer of Ethiopia and to amalgamate the whole of north-east Africa into one great empire. This would have spelt disaster to allied strategy, which depended for its vital communications in the whole theatre of the Middle East and north Africa upon keeping open the life-lines of the Red Sea and the trans-continental routes passing between West Africa and Khartoum. That the Italians failed was due to Wavell's victory at Sidi Barrani in the north and the manner in which the Sudan was held in the south. We are concerned here with the latter only.*

In Abyssinia and Eritrea, when the Italians entered the war in June, 1940, they had some 300,000 troops (including many white formations), 400 guns and 200 aircraft. About 100,000 men, with powerful artillery, were on the Sudan border, and the way seemed open to Port Sudan, Khartoum and Atbara. To check their advance there were no more than three British battalions, which had to be held as strategic reserves for the defence of the three key-points mentioned, and the Sudan Defence Force † aided by police and irregulars. The Sudan Defence Force could muster 4,500 men all told, with six motor machine-gun batteries—all Sudanese, with only two British officers to each company. They had no tanks and no mobile artillery.‡ The Royal Air Force was

* For the following see *The Abyssinian Campaigns*, H.M. Stationery Office, 1942.

† This had taken the place of the Egyptian Army in 1925. See p. 185.

‡ The remainder of the S.D.F. (Camel Corps, Western Arab Corps, etc.) were not a free reserve because the uncertain attitude of the French necessitated a watch being kept on the western border. There were also six infantry companies of the Equatorial Corps in the far south.

represented by seven machines of obsolete type, apart from the two bomber squadrons helping the Navy on the Red Sea coast. These puny forces had to guard the 1,200 miles of the eastern frontier from near Suakin to the Boma plateau. They could, of course, do so only by adopting tactics of bluff and harrying the enemy's lines of communication, and apart from their splendid morale, the only points which told in their favour were their intimate knowledge of the terrain and the fact that the Abyssinian population in general was hostile to the power which had for four years oppressed it without mercy. That they were successful was due to their indomitable courage and the brilliant tactics of their commander-in-chief, General Platt. The Italians were continually bluffed into thinking that they were opposed by enormously strong forces, and were given no respite from the hornet stings of small mobile bodies of which the protagonists were the motor machine-gun companies, and steps were taken to see that disaffection was encouraged in their rear.* On the very day of Italy's entry into the war the R.A.F. dropped bombs and the motor machine-gun companies pushed over the border, so staving off the main Italian attack for three weeks; but on 4 July the enemy, strongly reinforced, hurled two colonial brigades, four cavalry regiments, eighteen tanks, artillery and air-force, upon Kassala, and 2,000 men, guns and aircraft upon Gallabat, which was held by one platoon. In withdrawing from Kassala the S.D.F. saved most of their material, inflicted far more casualties than they suffered and continued their harrying tactics from vantage points to the north-west. The Gallabat platoon did likewise. By the end of July the R.A.F. planes from the Red Sea were bombing the Italians in Kassala, and by the end of August the motor machine-gun batteries, aided by British contingents, were attacking its outposts.

It should have been an easy task at this stage for the Italians to close their pincers.† Instead they found themselves about to be enclosed. The Sudan had been held by the Sudanese at the time of mortal danger, but now they were to be relieved by others in greater strength, and a great forward movement was to be set in motion. This also had its pincers.

* The fugitive Emperor, Haile Selassie, arrived in Khartoum from the north early in July, 1940, and his influence was considerable.

† They had invaded British Somaliland with 25,000 men on 4 August.

To the north was Platt's army, British and Indians and Sudanese, driving south-eastwards towards Kassala and eastwards towards Massawa; on the south was Cunningham's force advancing northwards from Kenya towards Addis Ababa. The former were to conquer Eritrea and break the core of Italian resistance at Keren, the latter to reach their goal in April, 1941.

The danger to the Sudan passed when Kassala was shelled on 10 September, 1940. The Italians sent heavy reinforcements, but their hesitations led first to their adopting a defensive rôle and then to retreat in disorder. They succeeded only in holding Gallabat for a while.* After the victory of Sidi Barrani, Wavell switched another Indian division to Platt's aid, and the Italians found themselves facing disaster from the Mediterranean to Somaliland, Their rôle became purely defensive, and on 17 January, 1941, they evacuated Kassala and our troops marched into Eritrea. On 20 January the Emperor re-entered his dominions between Gallabat and Kurmuk, escorted by his Ethiopians and 300 Sudanese of the frontier battalion. The decisive battle of Keren was won by Platt on 15 March; Cunningham reached Addis Ababa on 6 April, and the Emperor on 5 May. The Duke of Aosta surrendered at Amba Alagi on 18 May; and so ended the Italian empire in Africa.

During these major operations, in which the Sudan Defence Force took its full part, Sudanese irregulars and police (embodied as a *gendarmerie*) were also playing their part, acting independently and far from their bases against the posts which the Italians had established along the border and inland, harrying the enemy, cutting his communications and seizing any chance of penetrating behind his lines. In these tasks they were assisted from November, 1940, onwards by the King's African Rifles, who arrived to garrison Malakal, Melut and Renk and take part in the process of re-occupying posts lost in the early stages. They re-occupied Kurmuk in February, 1941. Belgian colonial forces also began to arrive on the Upper Nile in February, 1941, and finally totalled 225 officers and 5,000 men. They took part in the re-occupation of Gambeila in March and the capture of Sayo and Asosa over the border.

In the course of the war the Sudan Defence Force was ex-

* It was retaken by Mahratta troops on 12 January, 1941.

panded to almost seven times its original strength, and in addition to its achievements in the Sudan, sent units to take part in the North African campaign and to serve as garrisons in occupied enemy territory. The Stores and Ordnance Department of the Sudan Government undertook the ordnance supply services, not only of their own troops, but also to a large extent that of the two Indian divisions and other imperial troops—not to mention Abyssinian patriots and other irregulars—and also gave assistance to the armies in North Africa and the Middle East.

Chapter 9

Administrative Policy and System

WE have seen that in the early years of British rule in the Sudan the practice was followed of leaving tribal and village authorities to administer their own people. The reasons were threefold. In the first place, there was no practicable alternative, on account of the shortage of staff; in the second, tribesmen and villagers alike, and the former in particular, were accustomed to a patriarchal system; in the third, many of the heads of tribes in outlying provinces were men of power and influence who would have felt justifiable resentment at any attempt to dispossess them of their rights, and the Government desired their support and not their hostility. The Government itself had formed no definite objective regarding the ultimate political outcome and was concerned only with establishing order and the principles of justice. As this came about, a tendency arose in more bureaucratically minded circles and among the staff serving in the riverain districts of the north, where tribal authority was feeble, to envisage the day when the whole country would be covered by a network of offices, complete with an ever-increasing number of administrative officers, magistrates' courts, red tape and all the paraphernalia of modern government, including, of course, a complete separation between executive and judicial functions. The pendulum swung the other way some twenty years later, and hope centred upon the progressive reduction of bureaucracy except in those spheres where necessity made it appropriate. The closing years of British administration have witnessed a reasonable compromise between the two ideals.

The constitution has developed and undergone changes, but the fact that supreme military and civil command has remained throughout, under the terms of the Condominium, vested in the Governor-General alone, has ensured a measure of constancy and continuity. Until 1910 no formal council,

legislative, advisory or executive, existed. The Sirdar and Governor-General was an autocrat, and civil government followed a military pattern, the Civil, Financial and Legal Secretaries, the Heads of Departments and the Governors of Provinces representing his staff and commanders-in-the-field. It was then decided to regularise informal practice and 'create a duly constituted Council to be associated with the Governor-General in the discharge of his executive and legislative powers',* while at the same time re-affirming the general supervisory and consultative function of the British Agent and Consul-General † in Cairo. The Governor-General presided over the Council and there were, in the first instance, four *ex-officio* members, the Inspector-General ‡ and the three Secretaries, and two or more additional members appointed by the Governor-General. Decisions were by a majority vote, but the Governor-General had power to over-rule the majority, for reasons to be duly recorded. The main function of the Council was to pass legislation and the annual budget. The Rules of Council also provided that all administrative matters of importance should be referred to it, but not appointments and promotions, nor military matters, unless the Governor-General chose to refer such to it for advice. Some modifications were at the same time introduced in the original system of financial control exercised by Egypt, and the general effect of the new constitutionalism, coinciding as it did with the departure of Lord Cromer from Egypt, led to some loosening of the Cairo connection and greater independence for the Sudan Government.

Similarly, as experience was gained and the machinery of government expanded in the following years, the day-to-day exercise of personal authority by the Governor-General tended to devolve upon the Secretaries, the Governors and the Heads of Departments, though the direction of policy and the function of ultimate decision in all matters remained unimpaired in his hands. The Governors and Heads of Departments remained answerable to the Governor-General alone,

* A.R., 1909.

† Subsequently, until 1936, 'High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan', and until 1946 'Ambassador to Egypt and High Commissioner for the Sudan'. Thereafter, 'Ambassador to Egypt' only.

‡ With Slatin's retirement this post ceased to exist. From 1926 the officer commanding the Sudan Defence Force (the '*Kaid el 'Amm*) became an *ex-officio* member of council.

but a system was gradually evolved whereby they did not normally communicate direct with him, though retaining the right to do so. According to whether a matter was primarily administrative, financial, legal or judicial, or concerned with the social services, it would be referred in the first instance to the Civil, Financial or Legal Secretary, or, from 1927, to the newly created Secretary for Education and Health. The Secretary would consult any other Secretaries, Departments or Provinces concerned and then refer the matter, if necessary, to the Governor-General or the Governor-General in Council as the case might be.

Generally speaking, these principles have worked well and the system, with certain modifications, has lasted until recent days.* A potent factor in this result has been the unquestioning loyalty traditionally accorded by the whole British staff to the Governor-General. His was no temporary political appointment, and they were in the Sudan for the best part of their working lives, with no prospect of, or desire for, transfer elsewhere. No department in London controlled their destinies or actions in fact or theory; there was no parliamentary control, nor, save in the highest spheres, were many questions asked in Parliament about the Sudan; and, if they were, the Foreign Office—the only department concerned—was ready enough to reply with relief that the matter was one for the decision of the Governor-General. This discouraged the inquisitive and reduced to a minimum the endless demands for returns, statistics, explanations and estimates, which burden the life of the colonial administrator. So there grew up a closely integrated corporation of willing servants of the State, unclogged by the tyranny of the pen, concerned with little but their work, their hobbies and their families, and owing a ready allegiance to the embodiment of leadership and power in the person of the head of the State.

Recruitment for the political service, as the permanent civil administrative staff came to be called, was by a board † which met yearly in London and interviewed candidates who had lately qualified for degrees at the Universities. Those selected—usually between four and twelve, according to vacancies and

* Since 1934 the Governor-General has made a practice of acting upon the collective advice of the Civil, Financial, and Legal Secretaries—a triumvirate corresponding to the Chief Secretary in the Colonies.

† The same board, prior to Egypt becoming independent, at the same time selected candidates for that country.

funds available—were, in the early years, required to take an extra year at their University to study Arabic. For some years the Governor-General presided over the board; later this duty was generally left to the Civil Secretary and other senior members of the political service who happened to be on leave at the time when the Universities held their final examinations, and their aim was to choose the *mens sana in corpore sano* rather than to concentrate too exclusively upon intellectual brilliance. On joining the service the young man spent a few months at Khartoum or other central town, and was then posted as an 'inspector' to a province. He was required to pass a further examination in Arabic, and also in law, within two years. Whenever possible he would be apprenticed at first to an older official—a seconded officer of the Egyptian Army in the early days—but shortage of staff was so acute until after the First World War that the young inspector (later to be known as Assistant District Commissioner) was often left in charge of a large district, aided by an Egyptian *mamur*. In addition to the permanent pensionable officials, the custom grew after the war of also engaging, chiefly for service in the south, a certain number of older men, officers and ex-officers of the Egyptian Army as a rule, at a higher rate of pay, on contract for a limited number of years, which was renewable. Many of these have had a lifetime of service as the fatherly rulers of their remote districts, and it may be said of them and their charges, as of mediæval England, that 'absence of means of communication did more for human freedom than Magna Carta'.*

Yearly leave was, from the first, encouraged in the interests of bodily health and mental perspective, the district being left in the charge of the *mamur*.

In 1924, when the Egyptian personnel of the army was removed from the Sudan, and when revenue had somewhat increased, the system was revised in some respects. Each district was double-banked and Governors of provinces were given deputies, so that when one of two British officials was absent on leave, or transferred elsewhere, the other could 'hold the fort' until the place was filled, and so ensure continuity. At the same time the system was followed of transferring provincial staff periodically to one or other of the

* G. M. Trevelyan, 'Stray Thoughts on History' in *An Autobiography* . . . (1948), p. 85.

Secretariats at Khartoum, where they could get more understanding of the intricacies of work at headquarters, and of moving others from headquarters to the provinces to give them experience in the field. The result of the widening of experience so gained was not only valuable in itself but tended to reduce the friction which is bound to arise from misunderstanding the difficulties of 'the other man' if interchangeability is not the general practice.

The policy followed in administration also changed considerably after the first War. A quasi-military régime had given way to a predominantly civil one under a civilian Governor-General, and 'native administration' as a creed had been greatly fortified by the appearance in 1922 of Lugard's *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, a book which developed the theme expressed fifty years previously by Sir Charles Brooke of Sarawak and quoted in Sir Lee Stack's annual report on the Sudan for 1921:

> 'The common mistake Europeans make in the East is to exalt western civilisation almost to the exclusion of the native system, instead of using them as mutually corrective. There are two ways in which a Government can act. The first is to start from things as it finds them, putting its veto on what is dangerous or unjust, and supporting what is fair and equitable in the usage of the natives, and letting system and legislation wait upon occasion. . . . Progress in this way is usually slow, and the system is not altogether popular from our point of view; but it is both quiet and steady, confidence is increased, and no vision of a foreign yoke to be laid heavily on their shoulders, when opportunity offers, is present to the native mind. The other plan is to make here and there a clean sweep and to introduce something that Europeans like better in the gap. A criminal code of the latest type . . . or a system of taxation and police introduced bodily from the west is imposed, with the full assurance of its intrinsic excellence, but with too little thought of how far it is likely to suit the circumstances it has to meet.' *

Such writings had greatly influenced the outlook of the political service, and the corollary of the policy was, without

* Quoted by Alleyn Ireland, *The Far Eastern Tropics* (1905), p. 71.

diminution of the ultimate right of the ruler to decide, to encourage native authorities to manage their own affairs so long as they supported the Government and retained the respect of their own subjects. It was regarded as the duty of the district officer, and one gladly accepted, to learn all that he could of the history, habits, language and needs of his charges, to view their outlook with tolerance and establish mutual confidence.

As a help towards these objectives anthropology was also invoked. If local customs and ways of thought were to be respected, so long as they were not repugnant to equity and decency, they must be understood. In the north this presented no great difficulty once the common language, Arabic, was mastered and some acquaintance gained with the principles of Islam; but in the south the multiplicity of tongues and the more primitive beliefs of pagans offered more serious barriers, and even long experience was insufficient in itself to surmount them. Hardly a year had passed since the reoccupation without the need for a punitive expedition to be sent against one or other of the Nilotic tribes or the Nuba of southern Kordofan. These were by no means unjustified, for cattle-raiding, inter-tribal warfare and resistance to governmental authority could not be ignored, but too often an ignorance of the local outlook, or some action taken, or order given, in good faith, but without realising that it ran counter to some rigid superstition or habit, gave gratuitous rise to trouble. Pioneers in the scientific study of the tribes of the Sudan had been Professor and Mrs. C. G. Seligman, who between 1909 and 1912 had visited the Nuba mountains, the Kababish Arabs and the Beja, and in 1921–2 the Bari and others in the south. They were followed, shortly afterwards, by Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard who worked for several years among the tribes of the south-west Bahr-el Ghazal, the Azande, the Nuer and the Ingassana, won their confidence, and made a valuable contribution not only to science but also to administration.

The first formal steps along the road of 'native administration' date from 1921. In the annual report for that year it was said:

> 'Several tentative steps have been taken since the beginning of 1921 in pursuance of the policy of admitting

> the native to a share in the management of affairs and helping him to fit himself for the increased responsibilities involved. The policy has been carried out by different methods directed to the same object. In the first place natives of the Sudan have been selected and appointed to certain governmental posts carrying direct administrative duties. In the second place legislation has been passed regularising the exercise by native chiefs of certain powers over the members of their own tribes.'

The legislation referred to was the *Powers of Nomad Sheikhs Ordinance*, now long out of date, but still marking the first mile-post of an era.

> 'Whereas [said the preamble] it has from time immemorial been customary for sheikhs of nomad tribes to exercise powers of punishment upon their tribesmen and of deciding disputes among them, and whereas it is expedient that the exercise of these powers should be regularised. . . .'

This represented a concession to the legal authorities of the day, who were prepared to concede that certain nomads, or even semi-nomads, had a right to formal recognition of customary practices, but not to extend the process further unless it could be established that the exercise of power was already customary and effective. The powers granted were restricted to the judicial field and penalties were incommensurate with those already wielded by some of the more powerful sheikhs. To authorise one of these, accustomed to impose a fine of ten or a hundred head of camels, to inflict a maximum fine of £E25, had only the merit of establishing a principle and giving it legal recognition. In the same year a first step was also taken in another direction by the formation of municipal councils, but with advisory and consultative powers only, in the four larger towns—Khartoum, Khartoum North, Omdurman and Port Sudan. Next year, the Sultan of Dar Masalit, a buffer state in the far west which had lately been incorporated into the Sudan under the Anglo-French convention of 1919, was given authority to administer his coun-

try under the supervision of a British Resident, and some Chiefs' Courts were set up in the southern provinces 'to deal with local cases of minor importance'. These very modest experiments were uniformly successful, and in 1925 a small 'native administration budget' was framed for Dar Masalit, and a *Village Courts Ordinance* gave legal sanction for the customary proceedings of village sheikhs and elders, with a limit on their powers of fining up to £E2.

With the accession in 1926 to the governor-generalship of Sir John Maffey, an ex-Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier province of India, 'native administration' received vigorous impetus. In his first annual report, referring to the employment of local agencies, he pointed out that there were two distinct categories for the realisation of the object in view—namely, the native authorities, tribal chiefs and sheikhs, on the one hand, and Sudanese executive officials selected for the public service, on the other. 'The first', he wrote, 'is an instrument of devolution, the second of bureaucracy, and it is to the former that it has appeared to me wise to devote more particular attention.' He foresaw these native authorities as a 'foundation upon which a lasting structure may be built from the best material to be found in the country', and he pressed for experiments of wider scope, both on the merits of the case and for the avoidance of a costly elaboration of the administrative machinery. If these were to be successful, the native authorities must be adequately remunerated and the day be looked forward to when, the fabric having been strengthened, the bureaucratic adjuncts could be reduced.

Accordingly, in 1927, a *Powers of Sheikhs Ordinance* was passed. Not only was the restrictive word 'nomad' omitted, but the preamble offered a favourable contrast to that of the earlier enactment quoted, in that it added the words 'and whereas it is expedient that these powers should be extended'. The ordinance also enabled the Governor-General to establish courts of sheikhs in any area to which it had been applied. Major and minor courts were provided for, the former being vested with powers, according to their status, of which the maximum ranged from one month to two years' imprisonment (in a government gaol) and a fine of £E5 to £E100. Minor courts could fine only—from £E2 to £E20. Both kinds of courts also had civil jurisdiction. Governors were

empowered, subject to the approval of the Governor-General, to formulate rules, and they and their district commissioners could review judgments or transfer cases to the State courts if they thought fit. In addition, budgetary provision was made on a modest scale for remuneration to be paid to chiefs and sheikhs for carrying out their administrative duties and to meet incidental expenses.

In 1928 the *Powers of Sheikhs Ordinance* was revised to cover the case of inter-tribal and inter-regional councils, and a parallel measure was passed for the towns by amending the code of criminal procedure so as to legalise the formation of benches of magistrates to deal with petty crime. They were given powers of imprisonment up to one month and of fining up to £E5.

It will be noted that these measures were mainly related to judicial functions, but a few tentative advances were also made in other directions, without any attempt to draw a line between the administrator and the judge—a distinction which would have struck the Sudanese of those days as artificial and false, for the sheikh or chief,* as the holder of administrative authority, was to him the right man to administer justice. A few of the most reliable sheikhs were equipped with small tribal budgets, and a co-operative society, financed by the Government, was started, under the control of the native court at Tokar, to administer a fund for providing agricultural loans to cultivators in the Baraka delta. By the end of 1929 seventy-two native courts were at work in the northern Sudan, and the pressure on the State law courts had been correspondingly relieved. A *Chiefs' Courts Ordinance* was introduced in 1931 to meet the needs of the southern Sudan, and in the same year in the north a *Native Courts Ordinance*, broad and elastic in its sanctions, consolidated and replaced the various enactments of the past.

It was upon these foundations that the British administration of the Sudan was built. With the advance of education and the advent of politics as a major preoccupation of the townsmen, many developments and many changes have taken place, but these are not altogether in conflict with the older order. The tribal leaders have maintained much of their

* In the A.R. for 1949 (p. 214) we read that even among the western Nuer in that year 'the principle was established of divorcing the judicial from the executive organ of government'.

power, the townsmen have gained control of municipal affairs; but the politicians are in the ascendant.

It was towards the close of the Second World War that developments came fast and furious in the highly charged political atmosphere. General Huddleston had been appointed Governor-General in October, 1940, and in the winter of 1941-42 Sir Douglas Newbold, the Civil Secretary,* had undertaken a study of the problem as soon as evidence accumulated of a clamour for constitutional advance. The first outcome was a decision to form an Advisory Council for the northern Sudan, which might later, given the consent of the Co-domini, become a legislative body. The southern Sudan was not included, on the score of the lack of adequate representatives. The new Council was inaugurated in 1944 under the presidency of the Governor-General, and with the three Secretaries as vice-presidents. Eighteen of its members, all Sudanese, were drawn from the six provincial councils by election or nomination, two from the Chamber of Commerce, and eight Sudanese were nominated to represent the educated and professional classes. Its agenda was strictly limited to the affairs of the northern Sudan, and no discussion of southern affairs was permitted—to the disgust of the politicians of the north, who were suspicious of the intent of the restriction.

The demand for more was intensified, and in 1946 a formal Administrative Conference was convened between British and Sudanese representatives of political parties † to study the possibility of closer association of the Sudanese with both central and local government. At the same time a strong Anglo-Sudanese committee was appointed to make recommendations for the 'Sudanisation', without loss of efficiency, of the Civil Service. The committee reported exhaustively in 1948, and under the scheme propounded by it 62·2 per cent of the posts held by non-Sudanese were to be filled by Sudanese before the end of 1962.‡ As a corollary, the engagement

* Newbold died as a result of overwork in 1943. The debt of the Sudanese to him for his help and sympathy is incalculable. See *Editor's note* on Abbas, p. 109, and *The Making of the Modern Sudan: The Life and Letters of Sir Douglas Newbold*, edited by K. D. D. Henderson (1952).

† Except the strongly pro-Egyptian Ashigga, *q.v.* p. 192.

‡ See Abbas, pp. 106, 107. For further details see pp. 225–8. The appointment of a Sudanisation Commission under the terms of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1953 unfortunately renders the work of this committee out of date.

of non-Sudanese on pensionable terms ended in 1947, and long- or short-term contracts were substituted.

The Administrative Conference, for its part, was assisted by constitutional experts from England, and recommended the institution of a Legislative Assembly and a new form of Executive Council, and the British Government expressed their concurrence. Egypt raised objections, which will be alluded to later,* but in view of the general impatience being evinced in the Sudan, it was decided to go ahead in spite of Egyptian protests.

The legislation passed in 1948 created two bodies, the first of which at the time of writing is still in being but will come to an end with the achievement of self-government:

(i) An Executive Council presided over by the Governor-General (replacing the Governor-General's Council), of twelve to eighteen members, at least half of whom must be Sudanese, including the Leader elected by the Legislative Assembly (in effect Prime Minister), any Ministers,† certain Councillors without portfolio, and Under Secretaries, together with not more than four *ex-officio* members.

The Executive Council prepares all Government legislation in the form of bills for submission to the Assembly, and ultimately to the Governor-General for assent, passes the annual budget, and controls the finances of the country (subject to certain debt charges, the salaries of certain grades of officials and the provision for the Governor-General's office).

(ii) A Legislative Assembly comprising ten members directly elected to represent the seven major towns; forty-two members elected indirectly to represent constituencies in the rest of the northern Sudan; thirteen members elected by the provincial councils of the southern provinces; ten members nominated by the Governor-General, and the twelve to eighteen members of the Executive Council, if not already elected or nominated. Membership was confined to Sudanese, aged at least thirty, who must have resided in their constituencies for at least two years out of the preceding ten. The qualifications for electors were generally similar, but the age limit was twenty-five and there was a low tax-payment qualification.

* See p. 202.

† Present Ministers are those of Agriculture, Education, and Health. Ministers are appointed by the Governor-General after consultation with the Leader.

The normal term of the Assembly was fixed at three years. On the expiry of the first three years, the life of the Assembly was renewed for six months, and again for four months to October, 1952, but no more. For the present, and pending the constitution of a Sudan Parliament, the Executive Council conducts the business of government through provisional orders which are subject to subsequent acceptance or non-acceptance.

Certain powers of dismissal, appointment and veto are still technically retained by the Governor-General in the exercise of his supreme powers, and he may in an emergency by proclamation reserve to himself the powers delegated to the Council and the Assembly, but in so far as these reserve powers relate to an Assembly which no longer exists, there is no need to detail them. No occasion has in fact arisen for their exercise.

There are also about twenty advisory and executive boards and committees for agriculture, town planning, labour, public health, communications, etc.

At the end of 1951, of the 9,625 classified posts in the Sudan Civil Service as a whole, 8,412 were filled by Sudanese, 993 by British, 202 by Egyptians and eighteen by other nationalities.

The number of provinces has of late years been reduced by consolidation and regrouping of districts to nine, namely:

Bahr el Ghazal	with headquarters	at	Wau
Blue Nile	,,	,,	Wad Medani
Darfur	,,	,,	El Fasher
Equatoria	,,	,,	Juba
Kassala	,,	,,	Kassala
Khartoum	,,	,,	Khartoum
Kordofan	,,	,,	El Obeid
Northern	,,	,,	Damer
Upper Nile	,,	,,	Malakal

These provinces are divided into forty-six districts, and each province has a British governor and deputy-governor. Of the district commissioners forty-eight are British and nine Sudanese, and of the assistant district commisioners forty-two are British and twenty-four Sudanese.* In each province

* The figures are those for December, 1952.

there is now a province council advisory to the governor and consisting of about twelve to twenty members, some representing local authorities and some nominated by the governor. In the sphere of local government the powers of the various courts ('local courts') were defined in 1937, when a series of laws was passed to co-ordinate the system on the lines of British town and county councils, and a statutory local government authority was set up for each rural area, township and municipality, in the northern Sudan. In more backward areas the authority continued, as it still does, to be the district commissioner; elsewhere it was either the local chief or a warranted council under appropriate chairmanship. The first warranted town council in full control of its own budget was opened in 1942, and by 1947 there were eight town, five municipal and eight rural district councils, together with a number of smaller councils, some advisory and some executive, in villages, groups of villages or agricultural areas. The system, however, contained many anomalies both in the matter of administration and budgeting, and in 1948 the City Treasurer of Coventry was invited to make a survey of the policy and practice in vogue and report. There were by then forty-two warranted councils and a number of other 'local administrations' and 'provincial local authorities' having budgets but no warrants, and the number of these was increasing fast. Dr. Marshall advised against the perpetuation of this form of differentiation and in favour of all-purpose authorities, but otherwise he approved in general the practice being followed and made proposals for the reorganisation of the financial arrangements as between the central government and the local authorities. His recommendations were accepted by the Executive Council and the Legislative Assembly.

The revenue of the various organs of local government, municipalities (five), town councils (twelve) and rural administrations (thirty-three),* combined, in 1949, was nearly £E1,300,000, and their annual expenditure, exclusive of their contributions to the central Government, was nearly £E880,000. In the early stages councils in rural areas have been formed by nomination, but the elective principle is being introduced; in urban areas the majority of members are elected, but a few are nominated. A *Local Government Ordi-*

* This number has since increased (1952) to thirty-nine.

nance passed in 1951 provided for a revision of the system on a uniform basis throughout the Sudan, and a special branch of the Civil Secretary's office became responsible from 1950 for the inspection and guidance of local authorities in respect of finance and administration, as well as for the thousand or so native and chiefs' courts.

On another plane—that of the State courts—the system of law remains that of 'equity, justice and good conscience' in all cases where there is no special enactment. The principles and general machinery are as originally established by Bonham-Carter * in 1899, though the codes were remodelled between 1925 and 1929. As from the first, civil justice is administered by a chief justice, judges of the High Court and district judges; but 1936 saw the creation of a Khartoum school of law, and the picture underwent a change. Where the judges had all been British, recruited in part direct from the English Bar and in part from the political service, members of which, having gained administrative experience and knowledge of the language and customs of the country, were transferred to the legal department and then called to the English Bar, by 1947 two judges of the High Court and nearly all the district judges were Sudanese. Where the provinces seldom saw a judge of the High Court, and then only for the hearing of a particularly important or difficult civil case in one of the towns, all the provinces (except Darfur) are now covered by a circuit of the High Court, and, when such is available, a judge normally presides over major courts for the trial of serious offences in place of the governor as heretofore. So too in the larger towns district judges sit as criminal magistrates in place of British district commissioners, who take only minor and simple cases, for it has come to be held undesirable in principle to combine judicial and executive powers except in those primitive areas where it is unavoidable.

On the other hand, in addition to the State courts staffed by magistrates, there are, as we have seen, the thousand or so courts of sheikhs and chiefs with varying powers, and these administer civil and criminal justice, dispose of minor disputes in accordance with native custom, and deal with offences against certain specific ordinances.

Mohammedan personal law continues to be administered

* Sir Edgar Bonham-Carter retired from the Sudan in 1917 to go to Iraq.

in the religious courts by *kadis*, who are now trained either in the *kadis'* section of the Faculty of Law in the Gordon Memorial College or the Kitchener School of Law,* and are subordinate to a Grand *Kadi*.

Before leaving the subject of administrative policy and its developments, more particular reference to the southern Sudan is called for. It was decided between 1948 and 1950 to introduce the teaching of Arabic into the schools of the south. This was part and parcel of a broader decision to unify and amalgamate the south with the north, instead of treating the two separately, as had been the practice hitherto. That they should have been so treated is easily understandable, for their problems were differentiated by a number of obvious factors. The north was Mohammedan, the south pagan, except for the scattered Christian converts; the north uniformly spoke Arabic, the south had a multiplicity of languages, and Arabic was known only at a few trading stations on the river; the north was progressive in its outlook, the south rooted in a primitive conservatism centring, in the case of the Nilotics, exclusively on its herds of cattle; the northerners regarded and spoke of the southerners as 'slaves', unworthy of serious attention for any other purpose and fit only to be exploited, the southerners looked upon the northerners with dislike and suspicion. History and economics, climate, geography, communications, language, culture, beliefs and background, being entirely different, what more natural than that policy and treatment should also differ? It is equally understandable that the Christian missions, fearing the challenge of an increase in Islamic penetration, should have used their influence in the direction of separation,† but it is easy to overrate the potency of this factor, for the views of the missions and the administrative authority were not always unanimous. To the local administrator the preservation of order and economic advance usually ranked before the success of proselytism, though in the matter of the social services there was a general identity of view. There was no secret about all these perfectly obvious facts, though no desire to parade them for controversy; but it seems ‡ that a match was put to the

* It is a tribute to their quality that some have been borrowed by the Nigerian Government to assist in the training of emirate personnel.

† See R.I.I.A., *G.B. and E.*, p. 133, note 3.

‡ See Abbas, *App. C.*

smouldering issue by the appearance in 1947 of an official paper published by the Sudan Government on the eve of the Security Council's debate upon the Anglo-Egyptian dispute.* This alluded to the protective barrier which it had been necessary in the past to build up against exploitation by northern merchants and others, the reluctance of the Government to throw open the south until its inhabitants could stand on their own feet, and the fact that the economic and social demands of the south could be met only at the expense of the north—a sacrifice which the politicians of the north were willing to make, 'gambling, it is to be feared, upon the imagined potentialities of the south as a financial asset instead of a liability'—and the fear of the north that the result of the Government's policy might be 'to split the country in half and even attach the south or part of the south to Uganda'. The document continued:

> 'The arguments whether such a course would be to the ultimate advantage of the southern Sudan or to the rest of Africa are many on both sides and the whole question might at some date form a proper subject for consideration by an international commission.'

Meanwhile, it was added, the Government was pushing on with its economic schemes and the development of local government institutions on lines which had proved successful in the north, and 'while doing nothing to prejudice the issue, is proposing to associate sympathetic northern Sudanese with the implementation of a policy which aims at giving the south the same chances of ultimate self-determination as have been promised to the north'.

This was surely reasonable. Why should the southerners not have the same chance as the northerners of choosing their own future? The suspicion was, however, aroused that the Government would work for a separation between the two and the incorporation of the south, or the most lucrative portions of it, into British territory, despite the intention of Article 1 of the Condominium Agreement.† This the north-

* *The Sudan, a Record of Progress, 1898–1947*, pp. 13/14. For the Anglo-Egyptian dispute before the Security Council see Chap. XIV.

† See Chap. VI. At the opening meeting of the Security Council the Egyptian representative remarked that 'preparation seems to be under way for creating a separate southern province which could eventually be joined to British East Africa'.

erners were determined to prevent, and the measure of their success is reflected in the decision of the representatives of the south, at a conference held at Juba in 1947 by the Civil Secretary, to accept the views of the north in favour of a united Sudan, and in the passing by the Governor-General in Council in 1948 of the *Executive Council and Legislative Assembly Ordinance*, which, as has been seen above, provides for the representation of the three southern provinces in an assembly applying to the whole Sudan. It is also reflected in the zeal with which the development of the south has been pushed forward with the aid of funds supplied by the north. The decision to introduce Arabic into all southern schools * above the elementary level followed in 1950 in order to engender a common feeling of citizenship. It is interesting to read in the Annual Report for 1949 that in Equatoria this decision 'was welcomed by all; but the policy of introducing Arabic as a medium of instruction excited adverse comment, until it was explained that vernacular languages would still continue to be used in village schools and that the teaching of English as a subject would be retained'.

The ultimate outcome remains uncertain. The decision would seem to lie not so much between the fancied desire of the British to annex the south to East Africa—which offers few advantages and presents grave difficulties—and the retention of the south within the framework of the Sudan, but rather between the claim of the northern politicians to absorb the south at one gulp, and the right of the people of the south to be given a chance to retain for an interim period the benefits of British tutelage. Much play is made of the financial dependence of the south upon the north, which is likely to continue for many years, but it is a factor of secondary importance. A far more potent argument for unification lies in the unity of the Nile as the source of wealth to Egypt and the Sudan. It is true that its sources lie outside the Sudan, but its main streams and tributaries and the great irrigation works, completed or projected, are shared by north and south. The argument may be conclusive against annexation by a third party, but the interests of both Egypt and the Sudan would be materially benefited by a continuance of British control in the south until

* See p. 129.

conditions there are sufficiently stable to warrant its withdrawal.

It is indeed possible that political developments and budgetary difficulties may in the near future lead to second thoughts among the northerners themselves.

Chapter 10

Social Services

I. *Education*

WE have seen * that within two months of the Battle of Omdurman Lord Kitchener appealed for funds for a Gordon College, that these were at once forthcoming and that the College was opened as a primary and technical school in 1902. Though it was hoped that in the future it would become a centre of higher education, the present need was for something much simpler, for the only people who had ever been taught anything but the recital of the *Kuran* were aliens—British, Egyptians, Syrians, etc. The clerical and technical staff of the Government and commercial firms were perforce recruited entirely from these in the first instance, but it was obviously desirable from every possible point of view that many of them should gradually be replaced by the local product, and that a modicum of literacy should be provided for the population as a whole.

The primary need was for teachers and for elementary (vernacular) and primary schools. A wise caution and lack of funds at first combined to make progress slow, and by 1903 there were only four primary schools in existence, in addition to the Gordon College and a number of elementary schools. In 1905 a secondary section was added to the College, and, as the need for skilled artisans for the Railways and Public Works Departments became urgent, a school of elementary engineering was opened and classes were formed for surveyors and assistant engineers. A military school for cadets from the College was also opened in order to supply native officers for the Sudanese battalions of the Egyptian Army.

By 1907 there were six primary and twenty elementary schools under governmental supervision and the first Government school for girls had been opened at Rufa'a; by the end of 1913 the Gordon College was providing a general secondary

* See p. 85.

course and training courses for *kadis*, teachers and engineers, a few small industrial schools had been opened, and there were about 1,000 pupils in the primary schools of provincial capitals. For many years demand continued to outstrip supply and no question of wastage arose; in particular, the extension of railways and public works called for technicians, and the demand for clerks and accountants became yearly greater.

In 1915 and following years a few young men were selected to fill subordinate administrative posts as assistants to the Egyptian *mamurs*. A training course was opened for them in 1919, and by 1924 there were twenty-six young Sudanese officers and seventy-six civilians working as such.

A beginning was made in 1922 in training assistant medical officers, and numerous small dispensaries so staffed in due course started work in the out-districts. A Kitchener School of Medicine—an appeal for which had been launched in 1916—was opened at Khartoum in 1924 for this class, aiming at a higher academic standard than that provided by the Gordon College, and eventually the school was able to produce from a six year course of study and clinical instruction a steady output of qualified doctors.

A little progress was also made in female education by the opening in 1921 at Omdurman of a midwives' training school and a girls' training college to provide teachers in girls' elementary schools. By 1924, there were twenty-four girls in the college and 344 pupils in the schools.

The years 1925–9 brought increased prosperity, and the number of educated Sudanese in 'classified' Government employment rose by fifty per cent as compared with 1924; in 1930 their total exceeded that of all other nationalities combined. Sixty-four per cent of their total of 2,756 were staff employed in technical and semi-technical departments. The total 'classified' staff of the Government in 1930, including the army, showed fifty-four per cent Sudanese, twenty-three per cent Egyptian, eighteen per cent British and four per cent Syrians and others. The increase was far greater in the departments than in the provinces because the Government was by now launched upon a system of indirect rule by devolution of powers to tribal authorities.

The economic slump which fell upon the Sudan, together with the rest of the world, in 1930–31 and necessitated

retrenchment in every field had the effect of putting supply ahead of demand. Where the output from the Gordon College four-year secondary course had previously been insufficient for all needs, now, with the curtailment of openings for employment and the shrinkage of budgets, governmental and commercial, there was a danger of wastage, and this, undesirable enough in itself, seemed likely also to bring about those troubles of a political kind which inevitably attend the growth of a class of 'black-coated' workers many of whom are unable to find employment. A general preliminary overhaul of the educational system was made. The results need not be recounted in detail, for it was followed by further periodic revisions at an ever-increasing tempo during the next twenty years. It is enough to say that in 1946 a ten-year development plan was introduced, and again revised upwards in 1949, to permit greater and more rapid expansion, and the present position is as follows.*

At the bottom of the scale hundreds of little sub-grade village schools teach the *Kuran* and elements of reading, writing and arithmetic. They are sponsored by provincial and municipal authorities.

The elementary schools form the foundation of the educational system. They provide a grounding in religion, the three R's, elementary geography, hygiene, agriculture and handiwork in a four-year course for boys of seven to eleven years. Unfortunately, but perhaps inevitably, they have always been found to foster that tendency to concentrate attention upon the chances of obtaining Government employment which is the bane of education in all Eastern countries. It has always been recognised in theory as undesirable that boys should come to despise the simpler agricultural and industrial pursuits of their fathers, but a growing literary bias in the schools has certainly led to that very result, though attempts have been made to check the process by combining attention to the needs of the countryside and the township with the maintenance of a general standard high enough to qualify for entry into the intermediate (primary) schools.

The elementary 'State' schools for boys in the northern Sudan number 250 with 50,000 places, and the latest programme plans to increase them to 356.

* The statistics which follow are those for January, 1952, except where otherwise stated.

The intermediate schools are stocked from the elementary schools and have as their main function the supply of a steady flow to the secondary. Their curriculum has a strong literary bias and English is taught. Twenty years ago the reduction in the number of entrants to the Gordon College and the simplification of administrative processes in the provinces caused some modification in their rôle; while continuing to be a reservoir for the Gordon College, they came to be regarded as more essentially the local provincial town schools, giving an education which would qualify the pupils to fill minor administrative posts, or engage in commerce, in their own natural environment. As a corollary a certain decentralisation control followed and a cadre of education officers was formed for duty in the provinces. The intermediate boys' schools of the northern Sudan now number twenty-seven, with 4,480 places, and it is planned to increase them to thirty-one. After completing a four-year course, the boys pass into the secondary schools at the age of fifteen. The staff is entirely Sudanese.

Secondary education was, until recent years, provided by the Gordon College, the primary section of which had been dropped in 1924. In addition, vocational training was given in the last two years of the course for teachers, accountants, translators, clerks and boys who were to go to the Kitchener School of Medicine. There was also a special engineering section, a *kadis'* section and a commercial course. In its earlier years the chief function of the College had been to feed the bureaucratic machine. The later tendency to decentralisation and devolution to some extent changed the picture, but, on the other hand, the immense increase of work occasioned by the programme of economic development made possible by the boom of 1925–9, had outweighed these factors and led to a vastly increased demand for the products of the College. Since the whole output of each year was at once absorbed, education came to be regarded as the equivalent of a pledge of employment by the Government. The picture again changed in 1930, and though a secondary education was still available for all who could afford it, it became impossible to guarantee subsequent employment and unwise to encourage entrants beyond the number for whom it was reasonably probable.

By 1934, with the removal of all its technical classes, the

Gordon College had become wholly a secondary school, but as the need for more and more educated Sudanese arose, schools of law, veterinary science, agriculture, arts, science and engineering were opened between 1936 and 1939. These were at first separate establishments, for the visit of the De La Warr Commission in 1937 had given stimulus to the idea of a complete reorganisation by which the college should in due course assume University status. It was in furtherance of this idea that the boys' secondary school itself was, some years later, removed to new quarters of its own, complete with boarding facilities, fifteen miles away, at Wadi Seidna, which had been completed in 1939 at a cost of £E167,000, but had been commandeered during the War for military purposes. Another secondary school was opened in 1946 on the Blue Nile opposite Wad Medani, and a third in 1949 in Kordofan. The three schools contain together some 1,200–1,300 boys. The intention is to increase their number by four others of a smaller size. In addition, there are five junior secondary schools with two-year courses. Four of these are for the training of teachers for the elementary and intermediate schools; the fifth has a commercial bias.

The Khartoum Teachers' Training School was transferred thence in 1934 to more rural surroundings at Bakht el Ruda on the White Nile, seventy miles away, and has grown apace in size, scope and reputation. It is now known as the Institute of Education, and its functions include the training of elementary and intermediate teachers, the preparation of text-books, the running of refresher courses, and putting the finishing touches to the training of graduates from the higher schools who are to become secondary-school teachers. It is also responsible for technical inspection of elementary and intermediate schools. Large building extensions have recently enabled the Institute to produce sixty elementary teachers a year and as many intermediate as are needed up to the same number. Adult and post-school education and welfare work are also undertaken.

A second teachers' training centre on a less ambitious scale was opened at Dilling in the Nuba mountains in 1948 and a third at Shendi in 1952.

The Technical School, originally started in 1907 at Omdurman, in 1932 absorbed the Gordon College instructional workshops. In 1933 it contained 206 boys drawn from the

elementary schools and intended to meet the general demand for craftsmen. There are now junior technical schools at Omdurman, El Obeid and Wad Medani, with 200–300 pupils, but over all stands the new Technical Institute at Khartoum, which owes its inception to the realisation that a fuller technical education is essential to meet the economic development of the country. Here both young men and women who have left school and taken Government or commercial employment may take courses in engineering, building, carpentry, art and design, etc. The Institute has 300 pupils and is being expanded to take 1,200.

The Railway Department also opened a technical school at Atbara in 1924 to train fitters and blacksmiths, and a higher course was added in 1938 to train chargemen and foremen. They also have their own schools for marine and electrical engineering and traffic. Other departments have followed suit.

The original Gordon College in 1945 shed its secondary school, and the higher schools which had been started between 1936 and 1939 were amalgamated as a post-secondary institution called the Gordon Memorial College, no longer to be directly administered by the Government, but semi-autonomous and subject to an independent council representing the educational, commercial, administrative and other interests in the country.

The final step in the direction of full University status and complete freedom from governmental control or political interference was taken when, on 1 September, 1951, the University College of Khartoum came into being, incorporating both the Gordon Memorial College with its various 'faculties' and about 400 students, and the Kitchener School of Medicine with its 'faculty' of Medicine. The governing body consists of twenty-seven members, of whom twelve are Sudanese. Academic matters are dealt with by a board consisting of Deans of Schools and senior members of the staff and advised by the faculty boards.* There are faculties of arts (history, Arabic, geography, English, economics), science (pure and applied mathematics, physics, chemistry, botany and zoology), agriculture, engineering, veterinary science,

* Of the academic staff of sixty-five professors and lecturers, eight are Sudanese.

administration and law. All students on entry must have reached a standard with the qualifications of matriculated students of London University, which has recognised the status of the University College, and London degree courses are offered in arts, agriculture, engineering, law and science. Those who do not reach a degree standard sit for a college diploma. In the years 1950 and 1951 fifteen students gained a B.A. and six a B.Sc. from London, and sixty-five the College diploma.

A large building programme aims at providing teaching and residential accommodation for about 700 students. For its capital development the University College depends on grants made direct by the Ministry of Finance, and for its recurrent expenditure on a grant-in-aid from the same source supplemented by the interest from half of a gift of £2,000,000 made by the British Government to the Sudan in 1946 in recognition of its war effort in the cause of the United Nations. Fees are charged according to the students' capacity to pay, but the income from these is small and likely to remain so.

The practice of sending promising students abroad for specialist courses at foreign Universities, begun about twenty years ago, when a few were sent to Beirut, has been continued and expanded.

Students of the Kitchener School of Medicine can qualify for a diploma in medicine, and this has been given recognition for certain purposes by the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Surgeons, which send a visitor annually to act as assessor at the final examinations. Its annual expenditure is met partly from endowment funds and partly from a grant-in-aid by the Government. Up to 1950, 106 Sudanese doctors had qualified. The number of students in January, 1952, was forty-eight, with a whole-time senior staff of three and numerous part-time lecturers from the Sudan Ministry of Health.

In addition to the State-controlled schools, there are about 130 non-governmental elementary, intermediate and secondary schools established by the private enterprise of Sudanese and other communities and missions. They contain about 12,500 boys and 3,000 girls.*

* Of these, some 2,000 girls are being taught in mission schools in the northern Sudan.

For purely religious teaching, there is at Omdurman a Ma'ahad 'Ilmi, which was started in 1901 at the local mosque. This institution has grown to considerable dimensions and is now attended by some 600 students from all parts of the country. The full curriculum provides a course of twelve years. It is managed by a council appointed by the Government and financed by a subsidy from public funds and private donations.

The Ministry of Education (formed in 1948) now has a separate department for adult education—a movement which originated at the Bakht el Ruda Institute—and its activities, which centre largely upon the Gezira, include literary campaigns, boys' clubs, libraries, a youth magazine, etc., and a publications bureau which produces reading material and school text-books. This bureau, opened in 1946, has its headquarters at Khartoum. A second bureau was opened at Juba in 1948 and issues Arabic primers for the south.

The education of girls, which started with a school at Rufa'a in 1907, has been a slow and gradual process owing to the innate prejudice of the Sudanese—now being overcome—against the emancipation of women. What little has been achieved is largely the result of the devotion and enthusiasm of a number of ladies, some missionaries and some attached to the Education Department, who have struggled to break down the barriers of prejudice. As late as 1924 there were only five elementary (State) schools for girls; there are now 135 with 21,600 pupils, and about seventy elementary teachers are trained annually. It is planned to increase the number of schools to 211 by 1956. The main factor in the progress made at all levels of female education has been the founding of a training college for elementary teachers at Omdurman in 1921. The intake of this was doubled between 1940 and 1945, and it now has 166 students. In 1951 a second training college was opened for girls from Darfur and Kordofan. The first intermediate school for girls was opened in 1940, and there are now five with about 600 pupils; of these, three prepare for a secondary course and two specialise in domestic science. A total of eleven is projected for 1956.

A secondary school, opened in 1949, now carries some 125 girls up to school certificate standard, and some of

them are reading for art degrees at the University College. It is planned to double the intake by 1956. Plans for the expansion of female education are far-reaching, but the difficulty which continually hampers progress is the shortage of qualified staff, and this is largely due to the enhancement of the marriage value of those in the training colleges by the acquisition of so much useful knowledge and domestic virtue. The recruitment of non-Sudanese teachers is recognised as being the only remedy.

Considerable though the progress has been, there is one reform which it has not yet been able to effect: the revolting custom of pharaonic circumcision is still prevalent in the northern provinces. The opening of schools of midwifery and the campaign waged by welfare workers and women teachers have had some effect, but more is needed.

In the southern Sudan, as was mentioned earlier, such education as was possible among a population so backward and with so many diverse languages, habits and beliefs, was for long left to the various missionary bodies, who were for political reasons debarred from proselytisation in the Moslem areas of the north. A system of modest annual subventions to these was begun in 1922, and four years later a more sustained effort was made to grapple with the problem by organising collaboration with the missions, granting larger subsidies to them and stipulating a general supervision by Government over the two types of school, the elementary vernacular and the intermediate. The latter were few in number but were to have a six-year course in which English was the language of instruction, and the objective a supply of teachers and clerical staff. A language conference was also held in 1928 at Rejaf, attended by representatives of the governments of the Sudan, Uganda and the Belgian Congo and their missionary societies,* to tackle the polyglottic difficulty, select the main 'group' languages deemed worthy of preservation and development, and study the questions of uniform orthography, text-books and grammars. The debased 'pidgin' Arabic, known as 'mongallese' was rejected

* The Bahr el Ghazal and Mongalla had recently been placed under the new diocese of the Upper Nile, which also comprised the northern part of Uganda.

and English was agreed upon as the language of official work. A decision of particular value, to which allusion has been made * was taken after the Rejaf conference, namely to engage a trained anthropologist to study the customs, beliefs, social organisation and languages of the more primitive tribes.

The educational system of the southern Sudan, which is supervised by an assistant director at Juba, now comprises elementary, central, intermediate and trade schools; inspectors of education are installed at all key positions, and training is provided for teachers drawn from the six main tribal areas. But there is much lee-way to be made up, for until 1946 the Government had played only a secondary part in southern education. A concerted attempt was then made to give to the south something of the attention which had been so freely lavished upon the north, and it is to this that the strides in economic development noticed in the preceding chapter are largely attributable.

The really momentous steps, involving a complete change in the policy of the Government towards the south, were taken between 1948 and 1950. The political background of these has been mentioned.† Here it is sufficient to say that representatives of the southern Sudanese had expressed a desire to be associated with the north and been given representation in the new Legislative Assembly. A result of this was the decision taken in 1950 to introduce the teaching of Arabic into all southern schools above the elementary level, and to send those boys who were qualified for higher education to the Gordon Memorial College instead of to Makerere in Uganda as hitherto.‡ A secondary school was opened at Rumbek in the Bahr el Ghazal in 1949, and there are now about eleven elementary, intermediate and vocational training schools managed by the Government in the south, with more to follow. The last figures obtainable show more than 1,000 pupils in those already existing. There are also two training schools for teachers, and a large educational centre is projected at Meridi, near the Congo border, which is to become the Institute of Education for the southern provinces.

* See p. 107. † See p. 116 ff.
‡ See Abbas, pp. 174–5.

Over and above these, the mission schools of the south make their contribution as follows: *

Boys	Elementary and intermediate:	About 50	schools	with about	6,000	pupils
	Sub-elementary:	„ 307	„	„	1,500	„
	Trade and teachers' training:	„ 12	„	„	500	„
Girls	Elementary:	„ 12	„	„	1,500	„

In 1952 the Sudan Government was spending on education £E2,946,997, or twelve and a half per cent of its total expenditure. Of this, £E70,000 represents subsidies to non-government schools in the north and £E281,000 to those in the south, and £E263,044 its contribution to the University College.†

The hunger for education which has been so noticeable a feature of Africa in this century can only be regarded with sympathy and understanding. It may have been marred by a certain precipitancy and influenced by careerism; but where is it not so? Behind it, as the real driving power, is the very human and laudable aspiration of people, who have lived for long behind a curtain of darkness and then been brought into contact with a civilisation more advanced than their own and seen glimmerings of light, to sweep the curtain aside and share with others a full view of the world's great panorama. At first, unaccustomed to the sudden brilliance, they are dazzled; uncertain of the meaning of the scene unfolded, they are confused. Bewilderment soon passes into self-confidence, but not into contentment, and as more and more vistas are opened, so does intellectual malaise increase. Dissatisfaction too often takes a political form and the true aims of education become blurred by ambitions that leave slight scope for an objective philosophy of life.

Twenty years ago, the pace of educational progress in the Sudan seemed rapid and perturbing to those who had worked there from the early days. Now it appears nothing short of phenomenal. But it is useless to cavil at the speed with which things have moved. There is, no doubt, room for criticism of details, for accusations of short-sightedness in

* See Duncan, p. 225.

† The total annual expenditure of the College is about £E350,000.

some respects on the part of those who directed policy, or those who carried it out, or those for whose benefit it was intended, but it would be a waste of time to pursue these. They have led to results which are established facts, and all that matters now is to think of the future. That responsible Sudanese have every desire to establish a well-balanced educational system catering for all the needs of the country is indubitable. The question is whether the essential aims of education are realised by its recipients. If a trite and simple formula may be hazarded, it would be that education is not a matter of collecting a store of information, but of acquiring an appreciation of standards and values, perspective and a sense of proportion, of learning to 'see life steadily and see it whole'. Those whose education does not include these aims—which may be summed up in the single word 'wisdom'—are merely receiving tools without instruction in the purpose for which they should be used.

In the statement of aims which the University College of Khartoum approved at its first meeting it was laid down that 'the College seeks that its students should acquire not only a high standard of academic and professional knowledge, but also those qualities of mind and character which are necessary for good citizenship and professional competence. It tries to develop in all its students cultured and balanced minds, objective interest in work and study, a sense of responsibility and a genuine desire to serve their country'. No quarrel need be found with that, provided that practice follows precept both in the University College and in the schools of the country; but, allowing that the wiser heads accept such principles, it cannot be assumed that those whom they instruct will follow them. Moreover, it is obvious that the danger of any excess in the number of those educated to any other end than the attainment of wisdom will be accentuated if a situation arises, as it may well do, in which funds are not available on the same lavish scale as heretofore and unemployment follows. 'Education', as the late Professor Coupland once pointed out, 'can as easily unfit a man as fit him for the life he has to lead.' *

Among the results of education as they have been so far apparent in the Sudan the most obvious is the tendency for education to subserve political aims; and so long as these are

* *The Empire in These Days*, p. 169.

dictated by patriotic motives, they cannot be regarded as reprehensible. A completely scientific objectivity is a dream-like concept. But the aims are now about to be met by the grant of full independence, and the real test is still to come: will the education received by the Sudanese, and such practical experience as they have gained in the short space of half a century, prove to be a foundation strong enough to sustain them in the management of their own affairs with wisdom and moderation, or will the patriotic motive degenerate into lower forms of personal and sectional ambition regardless of the true needs of the country?

A further point cannot be overlooked. It has long been fashionable for Eastern politicians to inoculate students with their tenets and encourage them, in the name of patriotism, to strikes and demonstrations in support of whatever propaganda is current at the moment. This has happened periodically in recent years * in the Sudan on the Egyptian model, and no doubt received impetus from the formation in 1938 of a graduates' congress claiming to represent the educated classes as a whole. The tendency is obviously outside the sphere of education properly considered, but unless it is checked, it will stultify the work of those who have a truer concept of the aims worthy to be followed.

II. *Health*

For some time after the reoccupation of the Sudan, medical work remained in the hands of medical officers of the Egyptian Army. Small civil hospitals were opened during the first three years at Khartoum, Omdurman, Halfa, Berber, Dongola, Suakin and Kassala, and by 1905 a few British civilian inspectors had been appointed and additional hospitals built at Wad Medani, El Obeid and Kodok; but it was not until 1915 that a fully fledged civil medical department took shape with its own independent director.

Expansion in hospital work was fairly rapid, but very little field work was possible owing to shortage of funds and staff. Malaria, smallpox, blackwater, *kala-azar* (leishmaniasis) and a variety of other diseases had always been endemic or epidemic in the Sudan, and to their number sleeping-sickness was added about 1907 by natives immigrating from the

* *e.g.*, see A.R., 1949, pp. 131 and 140.

French Congo to the Bahr el Ghazal. It spread rapidly over the Yei River district, and by the end of 1913 the Nile–Congo watershed was thoroughly infected. Though the disease was brought under partial control, it remained prevalent in western Mongalla and the Bahr el Ghazal until 1929, and it still occurs sporadically.

The First World War brought prosperity in its train and funds, long overdue, were found for an expansion of medical work to deal with the many long-established diseases and fresh epidemics. Of the latter, the most serious were widespread outbreaks of cerebrospinal meningitis in 1914 and 1915 and a violent epidemic of influenza which caused heavy mortality throughout the Sudan in 1918. A beginning was made in 1922 and 1923 with the training of Sudanese assistant medical officers and the staffing of about fifty-five small dispensaries from their ranks in outlying districts beyond the reach of Government hospitals and in the Gezira. It was for the training of these young men that the Kitchener School of Medicine was opened in 1924. Two other diseases gave cause for anxiety in the next two years—*bilharzia* and relapsing fever. The first, which is snail-borne, was endemic throughout Dongola and in parts of Kordofan, both of which provided labour for the Gezira, and the canalisation system of that area became heavily infected. Centres for treatment were opened, quarantines instituted, and preventive and remedial measures taken. In Dongola province the former overall incidence of eighteen per cent has now been reduced to four per cent. Relapsing fever, which is transmitted by lice, had first appeared in French West Africa in 1921. It reached Darfur in 1926, and by the beginning of the next year the position was very grave. About 10,000 deaths had occurred in the district lying nearest to the French border, and there was danger of a spread westwards through Kordofan to the central Sudan. This was happily averted by the energetic measures taken by the administrative and medical authorities. The introduction of D.D.T. powder has now made the control of the disease practically complete.

Between 1924 and 1946 the number of in-patients in Government hospitals increased six-fold, the number of operations seven-fold and the number of out-patients twenty-fold. There were fourteen Sudanese qualified doctors in 1930 and 106 dispensers, laboratory assistants, etc.

Let us now look at the picture of to-day. The medical organisation under a Ministry of Health ranges from general hospitals, of which there are forty * with modern equipment and an eye hospital at Omdurman and a school of hygiene at Juba, down to first-aid dressing-stations and travelling dispensaries which move with the nomad tribes. The most important link in the chain is the rural dispensaries. These number between 300 and 400 and are in charge of medical assistants who, though not qualified doctors, have been trained in the diagnosis and treatment of such endemic diseases as malaria, syphilis and *bilharzia*, and are capable of giving treatment to simple cases and deciding which are serious enough to warrant removal to a hospital. For the general treatment of women and children they are assisted by locally trained midwives, who use the dispensaries as their clinics. To complete the full purpose of the dispensary as a rural health centre, a sanitary overseer and a vaccinator are usually added to the staff. Where this has not been done, the normal public health duties, such as mosquito control, sanitation, vaccination and the recording of births and deaths, are carried out by the medical assistant himself. As far as possible, these medical assistants are posted to the districts to which they belong by birth, in order to obtain the fullest value from their services.

Apart from the Kitchener School of Medicine, training is given to laboratory assistants, midwives, nurses, radiographers, dispensers and the full range of public health staff. The numbers of Sudanese in the service of the Ministry of Health who had been trained for these purposes stood at the end of 1951 at the following figures:

Doctors	106 †	
Medical assistants	445	
Midwives	648	(plus nine staff midwives)
Nurses	181	(120 male and sixty-one female)
Dispensers	20	
Assistant radiographers	14	
Public Health officers	38	
Sanitary overseers	119	

* These are staffed mainly by Sudanese but also employ thirty-nine British qualified nurses.

† Less twenty-eight resigned, dismissed or died = seventy-eight serving, of whom seventeen had post-graduate qualifications.

The Public Health Service, among its other normal duties, is responsible for the health of the thousands of pilgrims who pass yearly through the Suakin quarantine en route for or returning from Mecca and require vaccination, inoculation and disinfection generally. While they are in the Hejaz they are looked after by a medical mission from the Sudan, which also gives attention to the pilgrims coming from other countries and is much appreciated by the Sa'udi Arabian Government. Sudanese public health officers can now sit for an examination of the Royal Sanitary Institute in England and gain its certificate.

The midwives' training school already referred to * has earned a remarkable tribute from the President of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynæcologists, who visited it in 1946. 'The work of the school,' he wrote, 'and the influence that spread from it was, I felt, more appealing than anything I knew of in all medicine.' The school has produced about 600 midwives and is turning out an average of thirty a year. A second small training school was opened at El Obeid in 1949 and a third in 1952 at Juba.

Of the various diseases that afflict the Sudan something has already been said. It is enough to add that smallpox has now been virtually eliminated by vaccination with lymph manufactured on a very large scale in the medical research laboratories at Khartoum. Sleeping-sickness has been tackled by re-settlement and war upon the tse-tse fly, and in 1945 there were only thirty-nine cases in all reported as against, *e.g.*, 839 cases in one district alone in 1923. *Kala-azar*, which was once uniformly fatal, can now be cured in ninety per cent of cases, as a result of research work on curative drugs undertaken in collaboration with the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. The treatment of cerebrospinal meningitis with sulphonamide drugs—first carried out in the Sudan—has, since its introduction in 1938–9, lowered the mortality rate very noticeably. Yellow fever, once a grave danger, has been eradicated, and yaws almost so. Leprosy still occurs, particularly in Equatoria, where some 800 cases were being treated in settlements in 1949.†

To sum up: confidence and co-operation have replaced the mistrust and suspicion which hampered early efforts, and

* See p. 121. † A.R. 1949, p. 123.

prevention is taking precedence of cure. The demands on the health service are becoming more than can be coped with even by the vastly expanded machinery. The annual expenditure of the Ministry of Health—about £E2,000,000—represents about one-twelfth of the Sudan's budget. The number of patients treated in the forty hospitals alone has increased by about 100 per cent between 1941 and 1951. The record is one of which the Sudan and its staff, British and Sudanese, may justly be proud. The former provided the initial training, scientific knowledge, organisation and drive; the latter are proving apt disciples and heirs.*

A ten-year plan, to cost about £E2,000,000, has been approved (1951) for the expansion of medical work, and has received the approbation of a representative of the World Health Organisation (Eastern Mediterranean), who was invited to visit the Sudan and advise upon it. One of its main features will be the separation of the public health service from the clinical. The number of general hospitals is to be raised from forty to fifty-four by 1960, and specialist hospitals —one for tuberculosis and one for mental diseases—and a teaching hospital are projected; also 150 additional dispensaries to bring the total number up to 520. Proportionate increases in the staff and recurrent expenses will also, of course, have to be provided. It can only be hoped that the finances of the Sudan will remain sufficiently strong to bear the weight of so admirable a project.

* There are still, at the time of writing, a number of British holding key positions in the Ministry of Health, as in that of Education, on the administrative and technical sides.

ANNEX

MISSIONARY WORK IN EDUCATION AND HEALTH

To the sporadic mentions made above of the work of Christian missions of various denominations in the fields of education and medicine, a few words may be added.

The Roman Catholics were the first comers. So early as 1846, Central Africa was proclaimed a vicariate apostolic,* and an Austrian mission arrived at Khartoum two years later and built a centre. The first two stations opened in the southern Sudan had to be abandoned on account of the heavy death-roll, and a similar fate befell the Franciscans, who had taken over the vicariate in 1861 and tried to establish themselves at Kaka on the Upper Nile. In 1875 a third band of Roman Catholics started work in Kordofan and the Nuba mountains: they were seized by the Mahdi in 1882 and spent many years in prison at Omdurman.†

With the reconquest of the country the opportunity of missionary work on a more ambitious scale presented itself. In particular, the Church Missionary Society and the American United Presbyterian Mission decided to tackle the new field. They were not allowed to practise in the Moslem areas for fear of re-arousing fanaticism, but no interdict was placed on the pagan south. The first arrival from the C.M.S., in 1899, was that universally revered and dearly loved man of God, Llewellyn H. Gwynne, who, after many years of vigorous and selfless toil in the Sudan, became its first Anglican bishop, and Bishop of Egypt and the Sudan, in turn.‡ The first of the American Presbyterians, also in 1899, was Dr. Giffen, who was able soon afterwards to make a survey of prospects among the Shilluk on the White Nile, and in 1902 to found a station at Doleib Hill on the Sobat.

Though proselytising was forbidden in the north, educational and medical work was not, and much was done by Dr.

* Trimingham, *The Christian Approach to Islam in the Sudan*, pp. 9 *et seq.*

† One of them, Father Ohrwalder, who escaped after ten years' captivity, returned to the Sudan at the reoccupation.

‡ In 1915 he also served as Deputy Chaplain-General in France. He retired in 1946 and is now in his ninety-first year. A Bishop Gwynne College was founded in 1945 for the training of pastors and church-workers at Mundri in Equatoria.

and Mrs. Hall of the C.M.S. at Omdurman to remove prevalent suspicions of the intentions of the Government. The C.M.S. started a girls' school at Khartoum in 1903 * and another at Omdurman in 1905, which was managed by Mrs. Hall until her death in 1925. The Americans opened a boys' school at Khartoum in 1905 and a girls' school at Khartoum North in 1909.

The objection to anything savouring of proselytism in the northern Sudan was based upon caution. It would have been too much to expect the ignorant to distinguish between the action permitted by Government to the individual and the action of the Government itself; fanaticism was still rife, and official encouragement might have given a handle to the propagandists for the charge that the Government was trying to change the religion of the land. As fanaticism died down, the work of the missions in the north came to be more gratefully appreciated on its merits by Government and people alike, and it is certainly arguable that this result would never have come about, or would have been seriously delayed, had suspicion been aroused.

In the northern Sudan C.M.S. medical work has been centred upon the hospital which they founded at Omdurman in 1912. It has seventy-five beds, an out-patients' department with three clinics and a leper clinic, and training is given to male and female Sudanese nurses. There are also nearby two dispensaries for women and children, babies' welfare centres and a children's home. Education of girls, mostly elementary, is carried out at Omdurman, Atbara and Wad Medani. It is sad to read † that owing to shortage of funds the hospital at Omdurman is in a critical financial position and that work has, for the same reason, had to be curtailed elsewhere.

The American Presbyterians have a boys' school (elementary and intermediate) at Omdurman, a girls' boarding school at Khartoum North and a village school and farm on the Blue Nile.

But it is in the southern Sudan, where few Government restrictions have been imposed, and where educational work was left almost entirely to the missions until 1926, that their

* This was transferred from the mission to the diocese in 1928 and became the Unity High School for Girls. See Trimingham, *loc. cit.*, p. 15.

† *Annual Report for 1952 of the Egypt and Sudan Church Association.*

work has been greatest. Here, from an early period, the different missions were given separate 'spheres of influence' to develop as best they could. This was found desirable in order to offset the tendency to open rivalry, in particular between the Roman Catholics and those of other denominations, which, in the absence of such special provision, has been the bane of other territories in Africa by exhibiting to all and sundry the existence of discord where only a common aim should have been apparent. To the east of the Upper Nile the Sudan Interior Mission, who were expelled by the Italians from Abyssinia in 1938, have been the pioneers, and have posts for the treatment of out-patients among the Dinka in the Renk-Melut neighbourhood and farther east. The American Presbyterians, after founding Doleib Hill in 1902 among the Shilluk, opened a station at Nasir among the Nuer on the Upper Sobat in 1912 and another among the Anuak at Akobo in 1939. The Roman Catholics in the south are distributed between the Shilluk and the Nuer, and give valuable training in handicraft as well as the inculcation of morality, health and doctrine.

This note, it must be repeated, is concerned only with the educational and medical work of the missions. It has been a great achievement carried out by a devoted band of men and women facing, in the south, conditions of terrible danger and hardship, sacrificing all for their faith and the hope of improving the lot of a wild and savage people, and effecting 'the Christianisation of everything that is valuable in the African's past experience and registered in his customs'.* What the future may hold is uncertain. It has been said with truth that the strength of Islam lies in its 'group solidarity', its 'devotion to the ideal of social unity shown in concrete in the *umma* [community]'; it 'has come to be used as a social and political asset to promote nationalistic ends'. † Christian missionary work has seemed, however unjustly, to conflict with these ends, and has therefore been suspect to an Islamic Sudan seeking self-government and independence. The question is whether, having reached its objectives, and having no need to fear for its political future, it will be content to exercise toleration and accept the aid of the missions

* Edwin W. Smith, *The Golden Stool*, 1926, p. 260.
† Trimingham, *loc. cit.*, pp. 44, 45.

in the common task of the furtherance of social service. It may be so, for education is bringing a broader outlook to the Sudanese. They have accepted the fundamental rights to freedom and equality in their Self-Government Statute and they will be predisposed to adopt policies consistent with civilised practice in the rest of the world. Moreover, it is reasonable to bear in mind that the southerners will be strongly represented in the new Parliament and will be no more unmindful of the part played by the missions in their advancement than of past Arab misdemeanours.

The Nile and Major Irrigation Works

THE great river of Egypt has been a wonder and a lure to mankind for thousands of years: a wonder because it appeared from the unknown to convert a desert into rich soil and give life, or threaten catastrophe, to millions of the human race; a lure because the wealth which it created excited the cupidity of the savage empires of the East, Babylon, Assyria and Persia, and, after their passing, the ambitions of great conquerors of the Western world in turn, from Alexander the Great and the Roman Emperors to Napoleon.

Throughout the millennia of its history the Nile flowed, uncontrolled and unpredictable, from its remote sources to the Mediterranean, and it is only in the last fifty years that the knowledge laboriously accumulated over a century, the engineering skill made available, the advent of more settled conditions in the upper reaches, and the provision of finance, have made possible the inception of those vast projects which are to harness the forces of Nature from beyond the equator to the sea and bring benefit and safety to Egypt, where 19,000,000 human beings subsist on 6,000,000 acres of cultivable land and breed so rapidly that their numbers must inevitably outrun any possible extension of cultivation. That the Sudan will also benefit is incontestable, but what means life or death to Egypt means only the difference between sufficiency and stringency to the Sudan.

The task is a gigantic one and will take decades of time and millions of money to complete. It is being tackled, as it must be if success is to be won, from the standpoint that the whole river is, from an engineering point of view, a single unit, each project, whether directed to the extension of cultivation or to reducing the risk of disaster, being correlated with others and playing its appropriate part in the control of the whole. Whether the need be for the storage of reserves or mere regulation of flow, or clearance of impediments, or prevention of loss by evaporation, no single item in the herculean

programme can be treated without meticulous regard to ancillary as well as direct effects. It is hardly necessary to add, that, if success is to be assured, agreement must be reached between the several countries holding different parts of the basin.

The general system of the river is comparatively simple. Its waters originate in the torrential rains which come, it is now held, in the main from the south Atlantic and in part from the Indian Ocean and fall in the highlands of central Africa and Abyssinia, the Great Lake reservoirs acting as natural controls. The three main constituents are the streams fed by the Great Lakes of East and Central Africa, the equatorial tributaries draining the country north-east of the Congo basin and the streams which flow from Abyssinia. The first two constituents, represented in the Sudan by the swampy morasses of the Bahr el Gebel and the Bahr el Ghazal, where the Nile

> *'forgetting the bright speed he had*
> *In his high mountain cradle in Pamere,*
> *A foil'd circuitous wanderer'*,

becomes embedded in the vegetation of the swamps, takes shape as a single river—the White Nile—near Malakal. There it is joined by the Sobat, including the Baro and the Pibor, which rushes down in spate from the east between June and October and contributes a quota amounting to about half its total discharge.

The third constituent is the Blue Nile. This rises in the high mountains of Abyssinia and runs steeply from Lake Tana down a deep canyon to the Sudan, receiving many scores of tributaries before it reaches the border near Roseires and thereafter the spates of two others, the Rahad and the Dinder, which contribute about ten per cent of the total. Fed by the rains of spring in the highlands, it joins the White Nile late in June at Khartoum, laden with red silt, and flows fast and heavy until September. It then decreases, and by the end of the year its force is spent: by April its volume is less than one-fortieth of its full flood. From Khartoum the combined stream of the Nile flows slowly in solitary splendour for some 3,000 miles down to the Mediterranean Sea, receiving as its sole help—and that only from June to October—the combined floods of the Atbara and the Setit, which

rise north and east of Lake Tana, at a point 200 miles north of Khartoum. In its course from Khartoum to Halfa the river is deflected and impeded for some 900 miles by rocky cataracts which render it useless for through navigation.

The whole basin of the Nile covers more than 1,000,000 square miles, and the length of its waterway from its most remote source near Lake Tanganyika is about 4,000 miles. Some 3,500 miles lie between Lake Victoria and the Mediterranean, and, of these, 2,144 miles are in the Sudan (with a fall of only 1,600 feet in the whole distance) and about 1,200 miles between Khartoum and the southern border of the Sudan. It is here, in this last-named stretch, that the most complex problems arise, for so great are the losses due to wastage in one form or another, that of the total Nile flood which reaches Egypt at present only ten per cent can be credited to the White Nile, and the White Nile is the main source of that country's 'low stage' supply.

The objective of Nile control, in the briefest terms, is first to even out the natural fluctuations of existing supply to meet demand and then to increase the standard. Four problems are involved: (*a*) 'annual storage', *i.e.*, to store 'untimely' water (water which cannot all be utilised) from the period of surplus and release it in the period of shortage—and it is to be remembered that the heavily silt-laden water at the height of the Blue Nile and the Atbara can be stored only at the cost of gradually filling the reservoirs below Khartoum with silt; (*b*) to decrease the losses of the present flow; (*c*) 'over-year' (or 'century') storage, *i.e.*, to increase the volume of water by building up in good years at the sources of the river a reserve which can be drawn upon in poor years: the capacity to cover a run of poor years can be found only in the Equatorial Lakes and, to a lesser degree, in Lake Tana. The fourth problem is that of protection from floods.

The vastness of the task involved can be realised only by looking more closely at each of the main projects in turn; nor will it, of course, be possible to restrict mention solely to those schemes which are to be carried out in the Sudan, for all are interdependent, and the precise position of artificial international boundaries, important and highly relevant as they are from the political aspect, is irrelevant when considered from the strictly engineering point of view. These White Nile schemes have in every case been initiated and are

to be constructed and paid for by Egypt for her own benefit, without particular regard to the subsidiary effect on the Sudan and its people, but the latter will certainly expect in the future to share the benefits in return for paying a corresponding portion of the costs.

The most southerly and one of the most advanced projects is that of the OWEN FALLS DAM being built near the Ripon Falls in Uganda. Its object is to convert the 2,600 square miles area of Lake Victoria, situated on the high plateau between the two branches of the Rift Valley, into a vast permanent reservoir—indeed, the largest in the world—which, supplemented by storage in Lake Albert, will provide 'over-year' storage for Egypt as well as 'annual' storage. Uganda will benefit at the same time by the construction of a station to utilise the hydro-electric power generated by the fall. The major work will not, however, be effective until the even greater and more complex project—that for the canalisation and drainage of the *sudd* area in the southern Sudan—is also completed.

This second project, the JONGLEI CANAL and barrage, involves a canal from Jonglei, between Mongalla and Malakal, to the mouth of the Sobat, a distance of 175 miles. The objective is to allow the regulated water flowing from Lake Albert to by-pass the great swamps of the Bahr el Gebel and the Bahr el Zeraf and prevent it spilling into them and so being wasted. Incidentally this will give rise to serious administrative problems, since the entire regimen of life for many hundreds of thousands of pastoral people will be changed, and the ancient grazing rights and customs of the Baggara Arabs to the north and the Nilotic negroes to the south will be affected over a stretch of maybe 900 miles between Juba and Kosti on both sides of the river. It can never be a light matter in any circumstances to persuade a primitive people that alterations in their ancestral way of life, made for the sake of others, are justifiable or desirable, even if hopes of alternative advantages can be held out. The alternatives must remain largely speculative, and the best hope of avoiding widespread dislocation and discontent must lie in the fact that the work must necessarily be carried out by gradual stages over a period of some twenty-five years, difficulties being met as they arise in the light of experience gained.

A further complication, moreover, arises in that as the various communities are re-settled on new ground there will remain the danger of their being flooded in years of heavy rainfall unless, as the Sudanese are already insisting, the storage facilities provided by the Great Lakes are on a scale sufficient to allow full control of their outflow to be exercised. To the eye of the engineer all these difficulties may seem secondary and their solution a matter for others. This is no doubt true, but to the eye of the administrator they are indeed formidable and fraught with possibilities not altogether pleasant to contemplate.

Farther north the problem of Nile control becomes simpler. Twenty-five miles south of Khartoum the GEBEL AULIYA DAM, the formal approval for which had been given in 1921, was completed in 1937. It takes advantage of the fact that the Blue Nile when in spate ponds back the sluggish flow of the White Nile, and the reservoir, which, when full, extends more than 300 miles upstream of the dam to beyond Renk, and thus overlaps the area to be affected by the Jonglei scheme, is filled during and after that period. The water so stored is released and sent down to Egypt between February and May, before use is made of the supplies stored at Aswan, in order to save extortionate loss by evaporation.

The problem of the changes involved by the wide flooding of the banks has already arisen here and been tackled. Compensation had to be paid for loss of land and the need to re-site villages, and alternative means of livelihood had to be found for those dispossessed. For these purposes a special fund was created by a lump sum payment of £E750,000 by the Egyptian Government to the Sudan Government. The alternative livelihood problem was met by extending a canal from the Gezira to water 38,000 *feddans* and by the installation of pumping schemes. Tenancies on these are reserved for those directly affected by the reservoir, and cotton and food and forage crops are grown under conditions of co-operative socialism similar to those in force in the Gezira.* By the end of 1949 expenditure had reached nearly £E700,000 and there was an unexpended balance (including interest earned) of about £E328,000.†

It remains to say a word about the dam projected at the

* See Chap. 12 for further details.
† A.R. 1949, pp. 25, 26, 243.

FOURTH CATARACT on the main Nile.* Here Egypt's aim is protection against flood—*i.e.* to hold back flood-waters in a reservoir and reduce them to safe dimensions. The dam would also be used, if necessary, as a regulator auxiliary to the greater reservoirs in the south, enabling water to be impounded from the tail of the flood for use in Egypt during the low season. The area to be flooded would stretch for some 125 miles to a point near Abu Hamed. Luckily the valley in this neighbourhood is not thickly populated.

LAKE TANA lies at an altitude of 6,000 feet in the Abyssinian highlands, and the construction of a dam at its south-eastern end has been in contemplation for half a century. The project was originally one for 'annual' storage, but has now been expanded to cover 'annual', 'over-year' and even supplementary reserve storage. Though only some seven per cent of the Blue Nile discharge comes from the Lake itself, as distinct from tributaries, control works would permit of storage of water year by year for the use of Egypt and the Sudan and, perhaps, for long-range storage against emergencies. Political complications and suspicions have in the past prevented an agreement being reached,† but it appears that the Abyssinians are now becoming interested in the possibilities of developing Lake Tana and the Blue Nile in their own interests, for power and, to some extent, for local irrigation. This factor may tend to increase the complications.

In addition, the Sudan is examining the possibilities of a dam on the Blue Nile near Roseires as a component of the Tana project. For the Sudan these schemes are of paramount interest, for they would make possible a considerable increase in the cotton-growing area of the Gezira, which provides the main item in the country's revenue. When the Tana project was first mooted the finances of the Sudan were in no case to share the cost to any great extent, but the principle proposed in 1920 by the Nile Projects Commission, which gave much study to the whole question, has always been accepted—namely, that 'this dam will be built by Egypt and paid for by her in the first place. Egypt will use all the water so pro-

* This project has lately been suspended by Egypt, which is investigating the possibilities of a vast new dam in the Aswan area as an alternative.

† For the Treaty of 1902 between Great Britain and Abyssinia safeguarding the Sudan from interference with the flow of water from Lake Tana see p. 86.

vided at the beginning, but the waters from the Upper Blue Nile Dam will, as and when required for the development of the Gezira, be allocated in increasing quantity to the Sudan, who shall then pay a share of the cost of the dam in proportion to the water she derives from it'. Since the Sudan is no longer a poor country and Egypt no longer as rich as she was in those days, it is to be anticipated that the cost of the Tana Dam, if it materialises, will need to be shared between the two countries *ab initio*.

The SENNAR (or Makwar) DAM, completed in 1925, lies about 223 miles above Khartoum on the Blue Nile. The level of its reservoir, which extends some seventy-five miles upstream, is raised from mid-July to November to command the main canal from which the Gezira plain is irrigated by gravity. Egypt's supply passes through the dam and down the river. In the next chapter some account will be given of the Gezira scheme, and it is enough to mention here that an agreement has lately been reached between the Sudan and Egypt for the raising of the maximum water level of the reservoir for the benefit of the Sudan to an extent that will permit of a considerable increase in the cultivated area.

It has even been suggested that, since the construction by Egypt of great irrigation works on the White Nile will involve considerable administrative problems for the Government of the Sudan, and since the Sudanese, despite agreements reached on paper, may not be willing to face the risks for the sake of the *beaux yeux* of Egypt, and may insist at any time, as a condition of the co-operation which is so obviously necessary, upon the grant of a share greater than that already conceded, the grant of independence to the Sudan should be withheld until a system of independent international control of the whole river has been instituted. International guarantees of Nile agreements and an international authority to develop the Nile were in fact included in the proposals made by the British Government to Egypt in October, 1951; but, whether morally justifiable or not, any delay in the grant of independence to the Sudan is no longer a matter of practical politics. The most that can be said is that the interests of Egypt, however vital, cannot be regarded as precluding the reasonable claims of the Sudanese to a share considerably in excess of that which they enjoy at present. The principle that irrigation, once established, must be respected; that Egypt, in

the words of the Milner Commission of 1920 ,'has an indefeasible right to an ample and assured supply of water for the land at present under cultivation and to a fair share of any increased supply which engineering skill may be able to provide'; that, put in the briefest form of words, Egypt has a priority of established rights in the Nile, has been accepted at all times. It was accepted when an international commission was set up in 1925 'for the purpose of examining and proposing the basis on which irrigation (*sc. in the Sudan*) could be carried out with full consideration of the interests of Egypt and without detriment to her natural and historic rights'.* It was enshrined in the Nile Waters Agreement of 7 May, 1929, wherein the British and Egyptian Governments engaged—

> (*a*) that 'save with the previous agreement of the Egyptian Government, no irrigation or power works or measures are to be constructed or taken on the River Nile and its branches, or on the lakes from which it flows, so far as all these are in the Sudan or in countries under British administration, which would, in such a manner as to entail any prejudice to the interests of Egypt, either reduce the quantity of water arriving in Egypt, or modify the date of its arrival, or lower its level';
>
> (*b*) that 'in case the Egyptian Government decide to construct in the Sudan any works on the river or its branches, or to take any measures with a view to increasing the water supply for the benefit of Egypt, they will agree beforehand with the local authorities on the measures to be taken for safeguarding local interests. The construction, maintenance and administration of the above mentioned works shall be under the direct control of the Egyptian Government.'

The agreement of 1929 still stands, but the whole background will be changed with the assumption of full independence by the Sudanese. They will inevitably contend that, although for the present they accept the agreement, it was made between Great Britain and Egypt and they are not for ever bound by its provisions. A foretaste of what is to come is to be found in a statement made in May, 1951, by the Sudanese Under-Secretary for Irrigation to the Legislative

* *Cmd.* 3348 of 1929. See also the valuable summaries contained in R.I.I.A., *Surveys*, 1925–9.

Assembly: he spoke of the Nile Waters Agreement as having been 'devised to provide for the conditions of that time and the then near future, without compromising the possibilities of the more distant future'. He then went on to describe the existing system of allocating the water of the Blue Nile at different times of the year, with the implication that it did not do justice to the Sudan. The 1929 Agreement, he remarked, 'has served its purpose. The Sudan needs much more water than the Agreement gives to her and the Egyptian Government has recognised this'. But where, he asked, was the water to come from? The answer must lie in the provision of new works, and the speaker envisaged the possibility of the construction of a dam for the use of the Sudan alone on the Blue Nile if the Tana project did not soon materialise. He accepted as clear the established rights of Egypt and the desirability of co-operation in the future, but added the significant words: 'but equally clearly there will not always be identity of view'.*

In October, 1952, an agreement was reached between the two Governments which covered not only the raising of the water level at the Sennar dam and the construction of the dam at the fourth cataract, but also a formula to govern the distribution between the parties of additional waters about to be made available. Under its terms Egypt has to reach agreement in this respect with the Sudan before new works can be started.† So far, so good; but the new era has not yet begun and its course is not likely to be smooth.

That a joint international body to ensure the co-ordinated development and use of the Nile waters as between Egypt, the Sudan, East Africa and Abyssinia is highly desirable admits of no doubt, but, since none of the governments concerned would willingly relinquish their sovereign rights, it may be that *ad hoc* agreements will for some time to come have to be hammered out by direct negotiations. The first step towards a more comprehensive system of joint control might well be the formation of a technical commission upon which the various countries would be represented, with a neutral chairman, charged with the duty of supervising the operation of water agreements already reached, the preparation of reports upon any projects put forward by one country and

* *Cf.* Abbas, pp. 23–8.

† See letter from W. N. Allan in *The Times* of 10 May, 1952.

affecting conditions in another, and the collecting, recording and publication of hydrological data.

As between the Sudan and Egypt, two key factors must be borne in mind. In the first place, Egypt's 'natural and historic rights' do not mean 'the whole Nile', but 'established irrigation'. Ever since the nineteenth century the Damietta and Rosetta mouths of the Nile have been closed through each season of shortage and the whole of the natural flow in that season used for irrigation: it is the surplus flood-water which can be stored, made 'timely'—and shared between Egypt and the Sudan. In the second place, there is a marked difference in agricultural habit between the two countries: in Egypt the winter crops, mainly cereals and legumes, are sown in the flood period and harvested up to March or later, to be followed by summer crops, mainly cotton and rice, whose area can be expanded or contracted according to the supply of water available—that is, according to the volume of the previous flood. This flexibility is denied to the Sudan, all of whose main crops must be started in the flood season, and whose water resources must, therefore, be known in advance —fixed and guaranteed at a safe figure which all but quite exceptionally low floods can supply.

The Fruits of The Earth

I. *The Gezira Scheme*

THE Gezira scheme has brought affluence to the Sudan and, at the same time, provided a triumphant example of what may be achieved in an African country by a combination of careful experiment, scientific research, administrative and managerial efficiency, and co-operative partnership between authority, commercial enterprise and native industry.

Before the First World War the resources of the Sudan had been meagre in the extreme. The southern districts were, of course, entirely undeveloped, and in the north the food crops grown were at the best of times sufficient only for local needs, and when rains failed, unable to meet even that simple criterion. Irrigation was confined to small pumping installations and flooding along the banks of the river; the exports consisted chiefly of gum arabic, small quantities of hides and ivory and ostrich feathers, etc., and some livestock. The provision of a paying cash crop was an urgent necessity. The choice fell upon cotton of the long-staple variety which had been grown experimentally on a modest scale in the areas flooded by the Gash and Baraka at the base of the Eritrean foothills, and by pumping installation at Zeidab in Berber Province. Investigation showed that, given artificial irrigation, the broad alluvial plain of some 5,000,000 acres lying in the angle of the Blue and the White Niles was suitable for the purpose, as well as for the growing of food crops as part of the process of rotation.

One of the first steps to be taken was that of land settlement and registration to prove and secure such private rights as existed. The work of the commission lasted for seven years, from 1906 to 1912, and was complicated by the uncertainty of boundaries, the need to sift thousands of claims, some valid, some baseless, and all conflicting, the migratory habits of the population, and, above all, by the Mohammedan laws of

inheritance, which enabled men, women and children living perhaps hundreds of miles away, to claim the rights of heirs to minute fractions of land. In the event, when settlement and cadastral survey had been completed, the Government compulsorily rented the whole area from its registered owners at the rate current for undeveloped land before the inception of the scheme, and then, having divided it into manageable units of uniform size to conform with the needs of systematic irrigation, re-allotted it to its owners in the form of tenant-holdings of uniform size as near as possible to the site of their original holdings.

Meanwhile it had been established that the damming of the Nile at Sennar was technically feasible, and Mr. C. E. Dupuis, Director of the Sudan branch of the Irrigation Service, which was started in 1905, had, in 1908, committed himself to the view that 'the Gezira canal may be regarded as the great hope of the Sudan'. 'It is hard to see', he added, 'how, without the execution of some such work, the country is ever to become satisfactorily self-supporting.'

The interest of Lancashire was aroused; representatives of the British Cotton Growing Association visited the site in 1910; the building of the dam and the cutting of the main canal to carry the water by gravity on to the area to be irrigated were decided upon early in 1914, the British Government having in the previous year passed 'The Government of the Sudan Loan Act' guaranteeing the interest up to three and a half per cent on a loan raised by the Sudan Government, not to exceed £3,000,000, for the primary purpose of irrigating the Gezira, and incidentally to enable the railway system to be extended and other lesser irrigation works to be carried out. Construction work, which had begun in the same year, was held up by the outbreak of war, but was resumed as soon as possible afterwards; but it was found necessary in 1919 to extend the scope of the Loan Act to £6,000,000, and again in 1924 to £13,000,000.* By the close of 1925 the dam and main canal had been completed, the first 300,000 *feddans* †

* For the Sudan loans see Chap. 13.

† '*Feddan*' as a unit of measure and '*kantar*' as a unit of weight are frequently used in this and the following chapter. The *feddan* = 1·038 acres. The *kantar* varies. On the Gezira scheme and pumping stations and the Gash (Kassala) the *kantar* (of unginned seed-cotton) = 315 *rotls* = 311·85 lb. The standard *kantar* of 100 *rotls* (99 lb.) is used for flood and rain grown cotton, except in the Gash.

put under irrigation,* and a highly equipped research station, for the study of plant-breeding, soil chemistry and the control of pests, was at work at Wad Medani.

Under the terms of the Nile Waters Agreement of 1929 the Sudan's share of the water is strictly limited, in order to safeguard Egypt from any diminution of her vested rights: the limitation is expressed, during the season of surplus, as a maximum discharge in the main canal; during the season of shortage as a fixed volume of water, based on the contents of the reservoir.

At the present day the scheme covers 1,000,000 *feddans*, and extensions are planned to continue at a rate of about 50,000 a year up to a limit of 2,000,000, but the latter figure is dependent on additional water being made available by the heightening of the existing dam and the construction of another, either at Lake Tana or in the Sudan at Roseires. The canalisation system is unique, in that it provides for storage by night in the minor canals, so that water is applied to the land by day only.

The partnership system under which the scheme was run, until its nationalisation in 1950, consisted of three parties: the Sudan Government, which was responsible for the building and maintenance of the dam and major canalisation, for the control of the main water supply, for making the land available, and for generally supervising administration; the Sudan Plantations Syndicate and the Kassala Cotton Company, highly efficient commercial concerns, which had already operated the earlier pilot schemes at Zeidab, Kitiab, Tayiba and Barakat, and within the Gezira itself, and were responsible for management in general, the provision of field and accounting staff and of ginning factories, offices, stores, etc., the housing of staff, minor canalisation, the financing of transport, ginning and marketing, and the issue of loans for the hire of extra labour; and, thirdly, the tenants, who provide labour for all agricultural work, the preparation of the ground, sowing, weeding, picking and clearing up to the point of delivery of the crop at the local collecting stations. These tenants number about 26,000 and are for the most part

* This was the area which the Nile Projects Commission of 1925 had recommended as the limit for the Sudan. It was amended by the Agreement of 1929 in such a way as to substitute a specified quota of Blue Nile flood-water in place of a fixed area. See Abbas, p. 83.

the original owners or inheritors of the land, the use of which —but not the ownership—was, as mentioned above, nationalised after the land settlement and before any work was undertaken. Since during the 'peak' periods of weeding (August and September) and picking (January to March), their numbers are insufficient to do all that is required in the time available, they are accustomed to hire thousands of workers from other provinces of the Sudan, and also many pilgrims, Fellata, Hausa, etc., from Nigeria and French Equatorial Africa,* who are very ready to earn good money on their way to and from the holy cities of Arabia: numbers of these pilgrims, moreover, have settled and formed permanent villages in the vicinity of the Gezira.

The net proceeds of the cotton crop are divided between the three partners in the ratio of forty per cent to the tenants, forty per cent to the Government and (until 1950) twenty per cent to the Syndicate, ginning transport and marketing being paid for by all three in proportion to their shares of the proceeds.

Tenancies are each of forty *feddans*, of which in each season ten are under cotton, five under millet as a food crop, five under leguminous fodder for the animals and twenty fallow. The food and fodder crops are irrigated free of charge and untaxed; no rent is paid; advance loans are given for the hiring of extra labour; tools and materials are provided, and the benefits of scientific research are always to hand.

The slump of 1930/31 caused a setback, for poor crops coincided with a collapse of world prices, and an equalisation fund was created as an insurance against future crises, and a tenants' reserve fund for the same purpose. This latter, by 1946, had reached a figure of more than £E1,000,000.

Since 1950 the Syndicate, as originally provided in the terms of its concession, has retired from the scene and management has been in the hands of a statutory corporate body known as the 'Gezira Board', which is an independent unit responsible to the Executive Council at Khartoum. Its duties are defined as follows:—

(*a*) The management of the scheme;
(*b*) the promotion of social development by any means

* In the 1950/51 season the figures for picking labour were 140,313 from the Blue Nile Province; 19,474 from the western Sudan; 23,850 from French Equatorial Africa; 19,284 Fellata, Hausa, etc., and 773 others: total 203,694. See S.G.B. app. 4.

having as main object the benefit of the tenants and other persons living within the scheme area;

(*c*) the promotion of research to further the productivity and stability of the scheme.

The twenty per cent of the proceeds which represented the Syndicate's share is now devoted mainly to (*b*) and (*a*). As regards social development, much has been done.* Hospitals and schools have been provided, including classes for women in child welfare and household management; adult education, with courses in local government, civics and elementary economics; co-operative societies; a training farm for tenants' sons, and recreation centres, Housing and sanitation, and well-boring to obviate the use of canals contaminated by *bilharzia*, have been undertaken. There is even a Gezira newspaper and a mobile cinema. 'Social Development' has in fact come to be interpreted as covering the whole process of devolution of controls, and there would appear to be some danger of the cart getting before the horse. Indeed, as the first annual report of the Board remarks, 'Some confusion exists about the meaning of the term "social development" and the field of activity it is meant to cover'. Village councils, rural district councils and block councils, the 'tenants' representative body', and so on, can do and have done good work in teaching self-management and agricultural efficiency, and their activities are in theory subject to supervision and co-ordination by the Board, but, as the Board admits, 'there is frequently a dilemma between the needs of good management and the claims of devolution', leading to argument as to where the power of ultimate decision lies. The dilemma is particularly noticeable in the case of the 'tenants' representative body', and the Gezira local committee, which represents tenants, local governments, government departments and the public, and is entrusted under the terms of the Gezira Ordinance with the management of the scheme as a whole, including the 'fostering of tenants' consultative bodies and consultations therewith'—and, be it noted, 'the making of recommendations concerning the allocation of funds available for social development'. However firm the intention to avoid friction and excessive centralisation and to work by compromise and co-operation,

* See also p. 127.

there is an obvious danger that, with the advent of self-government for the Sudan, self-interest and politics will play a part too large for the good of the Gezira scheme.

The research division of the Ministry of Agriculture, to which the Board contributes £E75,000 per annum, and which has also been assisted by grants of money and the loan of staff by the Empire Cotton Growing Association, has its headquarters in the Gezira, for the bulk of its work relates to the crop on which the prosperity of the Sudan depends, but it caters for the needs of the country in general. Its most important function is the production of disease-resistant strains of cotton, involving the identification and eradication of diseases such as boll-worm, *aphis*, blackarm and leaf-curl (the last two of which put the Gezira scheme in peril between 1929 and 1934) and the *jassid* pest, which is being controlled by a new technique of D.D.T. spraying. But cotton is not the sole preoccupation of the research workers. There are pests which attack *dura*, the staple food of the Sudan; there is the desert locust, which periodically threatens the whole of the Middle East; there are weaver birds and grasshoppers—and the methods employed against the locust have given the Sudan a leading part in the global campaign against it. In addition—and the point is an extremely important one—experiments have been carried out with a view to the inclusion with, or in part substitution for cotton of various fibre, grain and oil, crops; * for, though cotton is likely to remain the main source of revenue, any serious setback in production or prices would have fatal results, and caution calls emphatically for a broadening of the basis of the Sudan's economy.

Without entering into a maze of statistics, † some idea of the magnitude of the Gezira scheme and what it has meant to the Sudan in terms of cash alone may be obtained from a few figures selected from books and reports published in 1952: ‡

(i) The cotton crop of the Gezira averages about 40,000 tons of long-stapled lint and 80,000 tons of cotton-seed, and contributes more than fifty per cent of the Government's total revenue—and this apart from some 60,000 tons of grain and large quantities of fodder;

* S.G.B., p. 20. † For which see Chap. 13.
‡ See in particular Abbas, Duncan, S.G.B. and F.T.R.

(ii) the gross value of the average tenant's share in the cotton crop has risen from about £E20 in 1938 and £E50 in 1939 to anything between £E650 and £E1,000;

(iii) the gross proceeds from the scheme as a whole have been:

£E19,353,813 for the crop year 1949/50, of which the tenants received £E6,412,343

£E54,400,000 for the crop year 1950/51 of which the tenants received £E17,500,000.*

These figures, however, cannot be treated as normal ones, to be counted upon in future years. In 1950/51, in particular, an average yield of over six *kantars* per *feddan* was obtained from the cotton area, and this was thirty-seven per cent higher than the previous best, and prices were phenomenal. The value realised for the crop of 1930/31 grown on nearly the same acreage was only £E750,000.†

Apart from the effect on the general economy and sociological development of the country as a whole, the changes effected by the Gezira scheme in the lives and outlook of the people directly affected are revolutionary. Within the space of two decades a poor and backward people living a precarious semi-nomadic existence in a tract having an uncertain rainfall of a few inches has been built up into an affluent community of educated peasant-farmers having a well-balanced economy and accustomed to corporate responsibility. The Director of Research of the Pakistan Central Cotton Committee, Dr. Mohammed Afzal, toured the Gezira in 1946 and wrote:

> 'The Gezira is one of the outstanding experiments in socio-economic problems of the current century and its success is so great that it deserves to go down to history as a great romance of creative achievement.' ‡

Yes; and one is forced to reflect that there is nothing in the conditions of the Sudan so singular that the principles

* The estimated expenses for the same season were £E11,400,000. The tenants' share of £E17,500,000 represents about £E829 gross to each individual. When various loans advanced and expenses incurred have been debited, the net profit should be about £E757.

† S.G.B., pp. 6 and 7.

‡ Quoted by Duncan, p. 222.

thus accepted and the methods followed could not be applied *mutatis mutandis* in our Colonial Empire. Vision and foresight are not qualities peculiar to the Government of the Sudan; research and experimentation are not abnormal prerequisites to the inception of a large-scale project.

On the other hand, certain dangers have been mentioned; first, that, by over-stressing the merits of devolution and giving too wide and doctrinaire an interpretation to 'social development', factious politics may be unduly encouraged; second, the obvious dangers of having too many eggs in one basket. A third and very vital consideration also arises in connection with the former danger. The Board employs a staff of over a hundred British field-inspectors, engineers and others, as a legacy of the concession companies—men who have spent a great part of their lives in the Gezira and to whom its smooth working and efficiency are largely due. A select committee of the Legislative Assembly recommended in 1948 * that the recruitment of Sudanese for these posts should proceed as fast as possible without lowering the standard of administration. Are the two conditions compatible with one another? It had been hoped that the British field-inspectors would remain long enough to give time to the Sudanese to be trained and acquire experience; but the Sudanese are in a hurry, and it is being found that the British staff are tending to resign before replacements with the right qualifications are available. The attempt has been made to solve the dilemma by recruiting a few British and a larger number of Sudanese. This seems unlikely to meet the case, and in the matter of engineers the difficulty is even greater. With the prosperity of the Sudan entirely dependent on the Gezira, a very real danger lies before the new administration, and they will have to make up their minds whether the satisfaction of politico-nationalistic motives are to outweigh the need for efficiency. The wiser heads are not blind to the perils involved and will try to minimise the risks; but it cannot be forgotten that, however they decide, the British staff themselves will not be content to remain unless they can feel assured that they are in a position to carry out their duties with the same freedom and impartiality as in the past, and with the same confidence that their efforts will be successful.

* See pp. 225, 226.

II. *Lesser Irrigation Works*

It remains to touch upon some of the less vital, but nevertheless valuable, works which are in progress for the utilisation of river waters.

First let us turn to the 'flush' irrigation on the Gash and the Baraka, two muddy seasonal torrents entirely independent of the Nile system. Both rise in the highlands of Eritrea and flow in spate down to the plains of the north-eastern Sudan during the months of July, August and September, carrying with them a heavy load of silt. This, as it is deposited, forms deltas upon which long-stapled cotton of good quality and food crops can be grown.

The Gash area near Kassala was prospected in 1903, but when plans were taken in hand for its development, trouble arose with the Italians who occupied the sources of the stream in Eritrea. Though they could make little use of it themselves, they perceived the opportunity of extracting some profit from those who could, and offered prompt objections. The best that could be done by negotiation was to obtain from them in 1906 a formal declaration that the Italian Government, 'while reserving its rights over the waters of the Gash in its passage through Italian territory, would regulate its conduct with the Sudan Government, in so far as the régime of the waters is concerned, in accordance with the principles of good neighbourship'. Irrigation works of a comparatively simple kind were then taken in hand for training the course of the flood and good yields of cotton obtained. By 1921 it was clear that the area of cultivation could be extended considerably by control works, and also that full success could be attained only if the scheme, long contemplated, for linking Kassala by railway with Port Sudan were proceeded with: without it the cotton crop could never be exported economically. Accordingly, in 1922, with the backing of the British Government, a Kassala Railway Company and a Kassala Cotton Company were formed and a series of agreements concluded between them and the Sudan Government and the Sudan Railways. All the preference shares and nearly fifty per cent of the ordinary shares of the Kassala Cotton Company were subscribed by the Sudan Plantations Syndicate, and the agreement between the Government and the Company followed lines similar to

those in force between the Government and the Syndicate in the Gezira, with the native tenant as a sharer in the profits. The railway reached Kassala in April, 1924,* and on 1 July the Company took over the existing irrigated areas—some 9,000 *feddans*—in the Gash delta.

At this point the Italians returned to the charge and began to construct control works on their own side of the border at Tessenei. These were of doubtful value for any practical agricultural purpose but constituted a threat to Sudan interests. Accordingly negotiations were reopened, and in 1924 the Eritrean Government accepted a specific limitation of the amount of water to be subtracted at Tessenei in return for the promise of the Sudan Government to pay them twenty per cent of its annual receipts from the Gash in excess of £50,000.

Yields from the Gash continued to increase satisfactorily, but trouble constantly recurred between the Kassala Cotton Company and the highly unsophisticated Hadendoa tribesmen, who had rights which they regarded as amounting to full ownership in the delta and were accustomed each year to plant their crops and graze their animals there. They were not particularly interested in cotton and objected to any reduction of their rights: the Company, on the other hand, could not afford to see cotton subordinated to other desiderata, and found it economical to import as tenants tribesmen from the riverain districts whom the Hadendoa regarded as foreigners and therefore undesirable. The clash of interests led to ill-feeling and yearly disputes and was resolved only by an agreement made in 1927, whereby the Government took over the Company's concession and granted it in exchange a new concession of 45,000 *feddans* in the western extension of the Gezira. Since then things have proceeded smoothly and the Hadendoa, with greater weight given to their idiosyncrasies, and with their grazing and cultivating rights safeguarded, have freely taken up tenancies in the delta. Of the 55,000 *feddans* planted with cotton in 1929, about 37,000 were occupied by indigenous tribesmen and the rest by 'foreigners'. Here, as in other cases to be mentioned, the Government in effect holds the position of an agricultural bank which issues

* The railway was extended in 1929 with a loan under the terms of the Trades Facilities Act to join Kassala with Sennar and Wad Medani *via* Gedaref, and so encircles the whole cotton area.

the loans required for cultivating purposes. Generally speaking, the area under crop, cotton and millet, may be taken to cover from 40,000 to 70,000 *feddans* on a four-year rotation—that is, half or less of the total area commanded by the canals and regulators. In the season 1950/51 63,895 *feddans* yielded 91,266 *kantars* of seed-cotton, and in 1951/2 37,661 *feddans* yielded 66,157 *kantars*.

The cotton from the Gash is the main source of seed for the Gezira and the White Nile schemes.

The Baraka is a stream less regular in its habits than the Gash and runs almost due north from Eritrea to Tokar, which lies near the Red Sea coast to the south of Port Sudan and Suakin. It is practically unregulated, and the cotton crop and millet are planted upon an area which varies in size—say from 30,000 to 135,000 *feddans*—from year to year, with the volume of the flood. Experiments were made in the growing of high-grade cotton as early as 1903, and the Loan Act of 1919 mentioned above included provision of £400,000 for 'Tokar irrigation and railway extension'. In the year following highly variable yields were obtained from an acreage ranging roughly from 20,000 to 60,000 *feddans*, and Tokar assumed some additional importance as a source of cotton seed for the Gezira. A co-operative society, financed by the Government, was formed in 1928 under control of a native court to administer a fund for the provision of agricultural loans to cultivators in the delta, and here, as elsewhere, co-partnership between Government and tenant is the order of the day.

In the season 1950/51 64,340 *feddans* yielded 111,887 *kantars* of seed-cotton; in 1951/52 31,997 *feddans* yielded 21,064 *kantars*.

PUMPING SCHEMES

These began in a very small way. From 1918 onwards a number were installed in Berber and Dongola by way of security against famine, and in 1927 an experiment was made on a larger scale for growing both long-stapled cotton and food crops at Dueim on the White Nile, and gave a remarkable yield at 7·8 *kantars* to the *feddan*. As we have seen, the completion of the Gebel Auliya dam in 1937 led to the extension of a canal from the Gezira to provide an alternative

livelihood for those dispossessed by the flooding of the banks of the White Nile (38,000 *feddans*) and also the irrigation by pumps of an additional 23,000 *feddans*. There are now seven such Government estates covering some 36,000 *feddans*, run on 'co-operative' lines under the auspices of the White Nile Schemes Board, and growing *sakel* cotton, *dura*, wheat, forage and vegetables. A much larger acreage of such farms is held under licence by private owners. In terms of cotton alone these pumping schemes on the White Nile produced in 1950/51 203,644 *kantars* of seed-cotton from 30,805 *feddans*.*

Co-operative societies for producers and consumers are now extremely popular, and at the end of 1951 numbered 172 of the former type (chiefly for credit and marketing) and sixty-one of the latter. They obtain long-term loans from the Government to pay for machinery, lorries, buildings, etc., and short-term loans to finance the crop.

On the Zeidab and other private estates in the north American cotton is grown by pump, and the acreage was about 7,000 *feddans* in 1950/51 and 14,500 in 1951/52.

BASIN IRRIGATION

Is confined to Kerma and other smaller areas in the northern province during the period June–November. These, though marking in some cases ancient channels of the Nile, have not yet developed the deep and level layers of silt which may eventually enrich them and, depending as they do for their flooding entirely on the height of the Nile, vary considerably in extent from year to year. It is computed that they may amount to 100,000 *feddans* in a year of exceptionally high Nile but only about 10,000 when the Nile flood is a poor one.

In addition, of course, the artificial lifting of water from the river on to the immediately adjacent land by means of the traditional *shaduf*—a pole working on a pivot with a bucket at one end and a counterpoise on the other—and the *sagia*, or Persian water-wheel, carrying a number of pots on its rim, has been extensively practised on the lower reaches of the Nile during the flood season from time immemorial.

* Private estates accounted for 160,000 *kantars* from 24,000 *feddans*. In 1951/52 the yield was less good and only 122,346 *kantars* were taken from 42,946 *feddans* (total).

III. *The Rainlands*

So much for crops grown by means of artificial irrigation from the river. Let us now turn to agriculture of a different kind—that which derives from the rainfall—and at the same time touch upon the matter of flocks and herds, which also depend on the rainfall for their sustenance. The yield per acre of food crops so grown is obviously not to be compared with that obtained by artificial means, but to the vast majority of the 8,000,000 inhabitants of the Sudan these crops, and grazing for their camels, cattle, sheep and goats, are, and always have been and will be, the basis of life.

From the descriptions already given it will be evident that, away from the river, to east and west, in the most northerly provinces, there is practically no cultivation. Rains are so scarce that it is only here and there, in shallow valleys, that small patches of millet are worth the sowing, and camels, with a few sheep and goats, are the mainstay of the nomadic tribes. In northern Kordofan and to the west of Dongola the camels of these Arabs, after the rains are over, are driven in November far to the cold north-west, where a winter grass known as *gizzu* is to be found. In these desolate regions they remain until early in February with no water to drink, their herdsmen living almost entirely on their milk, supplemented at intervals by supplies of corn and water carried by caravan from the nearest inhabited sites—a distance of anything from three to ten days' journey. In February, when the *gizzu* is over, they return southwards in prime condition.

In the broad sandy belt of the Sudan, from Darfur to Kassala, where the rains fall from July to October, much of the country's supply of grain (*dura* and *dukhn*) is grown, and sesame for oil-seeds. Rain-grown cotton was almost unknown in these parts until after the First World War, and the short-staple American variety was then established in the fertile valleys of the Nuba Mountains. In the season 1951/52 American rain-grown cotton from Kordofan, Equatoria, and elsewhere in smaller quantities, yielded 253,367 *kantars* of seed-cotton from 191,528 *feddans*, figures which represent more than treble the production and double the acreage of 1949/50.

On the eastern side and in the Upper Nile Province conditions favour *harig* cultivation: the grasslands are protected by

firelines and left to regenerate until, after several years, the grass has formed a thick mat: then, after the first rains have germinated weed seeds under it, the old grass is burnt off, leaving the ground re-fertilised. About 300,000 *feddans* of this land were selected in 1945 for the introduction of mechanical farming of grain and oil-seeds, and, this having proved successful, the scheme is being duplicated in an area of rather heavier rainfall to the south.

Rain-water is conserved in these eastern districts, and on a smaller scale elsewhere, by a highly economical system of *hafirs*, *i.e.*, shallow ponds which are deepened and revetted to permit of storage. The method was used by the people of the Meroitic period some 2,000 years ago for the same primary purpose, in order that sheep and cattle may remain in the uplands as long as grass and water last, instead of having to be driven down prematurely to be watered on the river-banks, where the congestion of herds leaves insufficient fodder for their grazing.

Many of the ancient *hafirs* have been reopened, and under the auspices of a 'rural water supplies and conservation board', which was set up in 1944, a considerable programme for the improvement of water supplies by the excavation of more by teams of 'carry-all' scraper excavators, and by well-digging, is under way. The same board also deals with the soil erosion in the central areas of the country and more particularly in the vicinity of thickly populated areas, where it is more serious.

A five-year (1951/56) development plan, which has been adopted for the whole country and is to cost £E24,000,000, includes provision for the further development of the central rainlands, including £E2,000,000 for rural water supplies and the establishment of a research station for rainland development.

In Equatoria the heavier rainfall and richer soil give greater latitude to the cultivator, and the primary need is to increase the quantity and quality of the native diet and prevent the recurrence of periods of famine, which used to be almost perennial. It is hoped at the same time to expand the production of cash crops, in spite of the serious handicap presented by the cost of transport. Since 1945 a large-scale experiment of particular interest has been carried out, with an initial loan of £E500,000 in the forest country of that en-

terprising and lively tribe, the Azande, under the auspices of a Government corporation, the Equatoria Projects Board.* The population, previously living in scattered huts in the forest, have been gradually resettled in planned cultivation areas under the fatherly direction of a British District Commissioner who has lived with them for twenty years, and are engaged in growing on a co-operative basis their own food, forage and cash crops such as cotton (American) for clothing, cotton-seed and palm-nuts to be locally pressed and manufactured into soap, etc. They have their own cotton-ginnery, spinning and weaving-sheds and machinery, a power-station and a sawmill, a mechanical tannery, various factories and storage-sheds, and are well set on the road to industrial and agricultural self-sufficiency. In fact the Azande have passed that stage, for in 1950 they produced 8,000,000 lb. of cotton, which was exported to England and brought in a handsome profit. Otherwise, their products are sold locally in shops and by travelling sales-vans and the surplus disposed of elsewhere in the Sudan. Profits are applied to the upkeep of an agricultural research farm and training college, schools, hospitals and recreation.

Among the other crops of the south are maize, sesame, ground-nuts, cow-peas, pigeon-peas, cassava, pumpkins and eleusine; and experiment has shown that, in addition to cotton, such other 'foreign' crops as rice, tapioca, sugar-cane, tea and tobacco can be grown.

On the other side of the picture, it is perturbing to read in the Annual Report for 1949 † that in the Bahr el Ghazal—*quantum mutatus*—'Motor accidents were regrettably common . . . alcohol was an all too common cause. . . .'

The animal population of the Sudan was estimated in 1952 at roughly 1,100,000 camels, 3,200,000 cattle, 4,800,000 sheep and 4,000,000 goats. The first two groups are largely owned by tribesmen, to whom they represent a standard of social importance—camels to the nomad Arabs of the north, cattle to the Baggara Arabs and the Nilotic tribes. To the latter, cattle represent the be-all and end-all of existence: their whole life centres round them and they are the economic

* See an interesting article in the *Economist* of 23 February, 1952; also Duncan, pp. 219–220.

† p. 226.

basis of this primitive society. Dowries and blood-fines are paid in cattle, and cattle are the incentive to their inter-tribal wars; they are content to watch and tend and talk of cattle by night and day, and they take no pleasure in any labour but the care of cattle; cattle 'are the core round which daily life is organised' and, it has been aptly added, *cherchez la vache* is the best advice that can be given to those who desire to understand their behaviour.*

Nor are the economic uses of camels and cattle by any means negligible. The camel of the heavy *hamla* type is a valuable adjunct to inland transport and is also exported to Egypt for meat; the cattle, though poor in quality, provide milk, hides and clarified butter, and the bulls are used by some of the Baggara as baggage animals. Cattle and sheep are also exported 'on the hoof', and a large meat factory which has been erected by Messrs. Liebig at Kosti and will come into production shortly promises to become a valuable economic asset. In 1951 the total export figures were about 28,000 cattle, 38,000 camels and 51,000 sheep valued at £E1,883,366.

Of the goat little need be said except that as an agent of destruction it has few rivals. Its survival is chiefly due to the fact that by its milk it provides a livelihood for innumerable old women who have no other source of income.

The use of biological agents has done much to reduce epizootic disease such as cattle plague, bovine pleuro-pneumonia trypanosomiasis, etc. For long the use of prophylactics in pastoral areas was restricted by the fear of over-stocking, but with the extension of anti-erosion measures it has now become possible to think in terms of full immunisation in defined cattle areas. Selective breeding of cattle appears less likely to prove successful than steps for the eradication of disease and improvement of pastures. Veterinary education, once confined to the training of orderlies, tribal dressers and such like, has, since 1938, blossomed into a higher school in which students, having completed a secondary course, receive training of a European standard. In September, 1952, in addition to the headquarters staff of the department, there were Veterinary Inspectors in all the provinces, and a large, well-qualified staff, some British and some Sudanese, manning the laboratory services in north and south.

* Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer* (1940), pp. 16, 48.

Forestry cannot be counted a major industry in the Sudan, though it has received much attention in recent years. The responsible department is divided into sylvicultural and utilisation branches, the former controlling afforestation and central forest reserves, the latter felling, saw-milling and marketing. Apart from such forest produce as gum, the need of the Sudan for timber—*e.g.*, for railway sleepers, boat-building and building in general—is great, and it is also required for fuel, since the Sudan has neither coal nor oil resources. Even so, timber can be obtained only from forests which lie within easy reach of navigable rivers, and climatic conditions ordain that distant Equatoria must be the main source of supply. Teak and cypress, *inter alia*, are being planted there. Sudanese officials attend the Edinburgh University School of Forestry to obtain degrees.

Gum is the only forest product exported from the Sudan on any scale worth mentioning, but this scale is very considerable, for seven-eighths of the world's supply is shipped from Port Sudan for use in the making of sweets, medicines, adhesives, etc. The total value of this export in 1951 was nearly £E3,500,000 * and almost three-quarters of it was from Kordofan.

Two varieties of the gum-producing acacia grow wild in the central sandy belt between Darfur and Kassala, and are a fruitful source, not only of revenue, but also of dispute between the rival tappers on the one hand and between the nomads, who are apt to fire the long grass, and the villagers who object to their gum trees being scorched.

* See F.T.R., pp. 16 and 234 for details.

Chapter 13

Finance and Trade

THE picture of the Sudan's economic and social progress would be incomplete without a general glance at the changes that have taken place in its financial conditions and the scope of its commercial activities.

Until 1912 the annual deficits of the Sudan Government were made good by Egypt, as agreed at the time of the reconquest,* and from time to time Egypt also advanced money for development works. In 1913 the Sudan budget was balanced for the first time with revenue at £E1,568,352 and expenditure at £E1,533,063.† It was then agreed that the Egyptian contribution in aid of civil expenditure should cease, and the Sudan in future be credited with customs dues collected in Egypt on goods coming to or from the Sudan. Egypt, on the other hand, was to continue to pay for the cost of maintaining the Egyptian Army in the Sudan. The cost of the British troops stationed there fell upon the British Government. During the First World War the demand in Egypt and Palestine for camels, cattle, sheep and corn from the Sudan, coinciding with good harvests and high cotton prices, brought prosperity to the country, and the Government was able to start building up a general reserve fund to finance its urgent needs for capital expenditure. By 1919 the revenue was £E2,992,792 and by 1922 £E3,498,595. Between 1922 and 1927 the whole field of finance was overhauled by Sir G. Schuster as Financial Secretary, and in 1929 revenue stood at £E6,981,590 as against an expenditure of £E6,610,274. Then followed the world-wide period of depression, and it hit the Sudan doubly hard in the early thirties, in that the Gezira cotton crops had failed for two years in succession, owing to 'black-arm', and locust invasions had wrought havoc on the food crops, while world prices for primary produce had slumped heavily. Expenditure on new works and development ceased altogether and trade was stagnant. Imports and

* See p. 80.

† The pound Egyptian=£1 0*s.* 6*d.*

exports in the two years 1931 and 1932 totalled less than those in the single year 1929. Drastic retrenchments followed and the number of expatriates holding budgetary posts was reduced by more than thirty-five per cent. Over £E1,000,000 had, even so, to be drawn from reserves to cover deficits.

Although the Egyptian Army had been removed from the Sudan after the murder of Sir Lee Stack in 1924, an annual contribution of £E750,000 was made by Egypt from 1925 to 1937 for military purposes in the Sudan; but this was accepted, not in the terms in which it was made, but in aid of general administration.* The amount was reduced to £E562,500 in 1938 and to £E312,500 in 1939. A final payment of £E62,500 was made in 1940, after which the subvention was abolished.

The nadir of economic depression was reached in 1932, when revenue fell to £E3,653,394, expenditure rose to £E3,853,798, and the deficit had to be met by a draft on the general reserve account. As the horizon cleared in 1934 and subsequent years, both sides of the budget increased steadily and the reserve position was also strengthened. In 1939 the revenue was £E5,053,765 and expenditure £E4,890,871.

The Second World War found the Sudan with ample reserves of imported goods, but these were all consumed in the first two years, largely by the military forces assembled in the Sudan for the East African campaign. A Controller-General of War Supply was appointed with very wide powers in respect of all imports and exports, and a close liaison was established with the Middle East Supply Centre in Cairo. Steps were taken to achieve self-sufficiency, *e.g.*, by encouraging the local production of food crops in place of cash crops; prices and distribution were strictly controlled, and it was even necessary to institute rationing—a process of stupendous difficulty among an illiterate peasantry. One result of these measures was to give the Sudan by far the lowest cost-of-living index in the Middle East.

In the first year of the war the military costs were carried by the Sudan Government. In 1940 the British Government assumed financial liability for the Sudan Defence Force, which, as we have seen,† was fully engaged against the Italians, less a contribution by the Sudan at the rate

* See p. 186. † See pp. 98 *et seq.*

of £E600,000 per annum during the war and transitional period.*

With the end of the war, thanks chiefly to cotton, both sides of the budget rose by leaps and bounds. The pace of development was matched by the demands for more social services and higher standards of living, and the Government was able to meet these and at the same time set aside funds as reserves against emergency.

In 1949 the figures comparable to those quoted above were: revenue £E17,672,105 and expenditure £E13,966,413. If account be taken of various appropriations of surpluses in 1949 to the development account, the revenue equalisation account and the general reserve account, the revenue figure becomes £E19,172,105 and expenditure £E11,774,413—both of which were records †—and these figures become respectively £E24,784,040 and £E17,754,672 in the budget for 1951/52.‡

The position as regards the public debt at the end of 1949 was that, of the total £E17,649,840 guaranteed by the British Government, £E10,586,160 had been paid off, and about £E150,000 of the debt owed to Egypt, which had been fixed in 1938 at £E5,414,525, free of interest.

The system of direct taxation by the State remains based on the cardinal principles laid down by Lord Cromer,§ and consists mainly of an animal tax, a land tax (but not in the Gezira), a tithe (*'ushur*) on rainland crops, tribute (assessed tribally in lieu of animal tax and *'ushur*), a house tax (in certain towns) and a business profits tax ranging from nine per cent to twenty-seven and a half per cent. There is no income tax.

Indirect taxation is in the form of customs duties on imports || and royalties on produce exported. The import of sugar is a Government monopoly, and the profits on its sale

* The Sudan also gave the British Government £200,000 in recognition of the services of the R.A.F. to the Sudan and in celebration of the recovery of Kassala, and £100,000 to the Government of India in recognition of the part played by Indian troops.

† See A.R., 1949 (the last published at the time of writing), p. 21.

‡ F.T.R., p. 253.

§ See p. 80.

|| Under the Condominium Agreement, Sudan import duties may not exceed those in force in Egypt, and Egyptian goods enter the Sudan free. This, in practice, is reciprocated by Egypt. No discrimination is made as regards the goods of other nations.

are in the nature of a consumption duty. Over and above the direct and indirect taxes, the Government, of course, receives as its main source of revenue its share of the profits derived from the cotton schemes, the railways, etc.

Apart from its ordinary budget the Sudan has two 'development budgets' financed out of current revenue: that for 1946/51, which is still open until its various projects are completed, and that for 1951/56. Appropriations to the former total £E13,750,000, which will suffice to finish uncompleted schemes. The latter, originally framed with a provisional total of £E24,000,000, now stands at £E34,000,000 and, even so, the rise in costs and staff difficulties have led to several of the approved schemes being curtailed, retarded or withdrawn. The components of the 1951/56 programme are:

	Per cent	
Communications	27·22	(including £E4,500,000 for railway extensions)
Production schemes	23·4	(including £E1,753,000 for rural water supplies and £E1,120,000 for soil conservation)
Social Services	20·26	(including £E3,540,000 for education and £E2,373,000 for health)
Public Utilities	15·14	
Administration	12·11	(including £E1,200,000 for loans and grants to local government authorities and £E1,149,800 for buildings)
(Unallocated)	2·23	
	100·00	

The Sudan is essentially an agricultural and pastoral country and its economy is on that basis. It exports foodstuffs and agricultural and animal products, primary or semi-processed, and relies upon other countries for its main supplies of tea, sugar, coffee and tobacco, as well as for piece goods, base metals and manufactures, machinery, transport equipment, etc. It has no minerals to speak of and its natural resources of fuel are barely sufficient for its own needs.

The railway system, based on Atbara, is confined to the north-eastern third of the country, linking the capital with the Egyptian boundary and with its only outlet to the sea at Port Sudan *—which has the best quayside and coaling

* Shipping calling at Port Sudan in 1951 had a net registered tonnage of 2,936,182, of which sixty-one per cent was British. See F.T.R., p. 251.

facilities between Port Said and Singapore—encircling the whole of the cotton areas of the Gezira, Kassala and Tokar, and tapping the rainlands of Kordofan, the capital of which, El Obeid, is the centre of all the trade of the western Sudan. The Kordofan line was opened in 1912, and thought is now being given to the possibility of extending the system south-west from El Obeid, but this clearly depends on finance being available. An extension southwards from Sennar is expected to reach Roseires in 1955.

At present the railways are run at a profit. The figures for 1951 were: revenue £E7,805,114 and expenditure £E5,143,674.*

The southern provinces are served by steamers. For the rest, the country has few roads, except in the south, where movement by land would be impossible for most of the year without them, and transport is either by baggage animals or, when the surface permits, by motor.

Civil aviation is more concerned with passenger traffic than trade. It is enough to say that until 1932 the R.A.F. provided the only means of air communication. Imperial Airways then started a service to South Africa through Khartoum, and in 1936 a trans-African stage between Lagos, Khartoum and Cairo. Khartoum has now become one of the most important air-junctions in Africa. In addition, there are a number of other main-route airports in use by the B.O.A.C. and South African, French, Belgian, Scandinavian and Egyptian services, and twenty-two subsidiary landing-grounds. In addition, since 1948 the Sudan has had its own Sudan Airways service using De Havilland Dove aircraft and Vikings on internal air routes and to Eritrea.

The phenomenal increase in the foreign trade of the Sudan during the last fifty years is due to the Gezira scheme, which has poured money into a country which, without cotton, must have remained unable to finance more than a fraction of its many subsidiary schemes of development, its ever-expanding social services or its adminstrative costs. Since cotton has achieved so much, a few salient figures are given at this point to form a background for the trade statistics which follow.

* F.T.R., p. 246.

In 1905 there were 23,898 *feddans* under cotton (and only 5,236 of them watered by artificial irrigation), and the revenue of the Sudan was £E665,411; in the 1952/53 season the area planted, inclusive of all types of cotton and methods of irrigation, was 599,061 *feddans*, and the latest revenue estimate for the budget year beginning on 1 July, 1952, is £E26,800,000.*

More detailed figures † of acreage and yield in the main cotton-growing centres during the 1950/51 and 1951/52 seasons were:

	Area in *feddans*		Yield in *kantars*			
	1950/51	1951/52	1950/51		1951/52	
1. *Sakel* type						
Gezira (gravity irrigation)	218,239	231,773	1,452,361		711,370	(3·1)
Kassala (flood irrigation)	63,895	37,661	91,216	(6·6)	66,157	
Tokar (flood irrigation)	64,340	31,997	111,887		21,064	(2·8)
Pump schemes and *sagias*	30,805	42,946	203,644		122,346	
Total *sakel*	377,279	344,377	1,859,158	(4·9)	920,937	(2·6)
2. American type (pump irrigation)						
Zeidab and other private estates	7,035	14,579	24,142	(3·4)	36,813	(2·5)
3. American type (rain-grown)	134,767	191,528	121,454	(0·9)	253,367	(1·3)
Total American	141,802	206,107	145,596		290,180	
Grand total	519,081	550,484	2,004,754	(3·9)	1,211,117	(2·2)

To turn now to the trade, of which the greater part has arisen from all this cotton.

The following figures show the trade of the Sudan with the United Kingdom, Egypt and other countries, summarised at intervals of ten years, with 1950 added to illustrate the effect of the bumper cotton crop as between 1950 and 1951.‡

	Imports			
	U.K.	Egypt	Other countries	Total
	£E	£E	£E	£E
1921	1,585,077	2,309,931	1,911,062	5,806,070
1931	1,164,485	759,422	1,837,106	3,761,013
1941	1,214,387	2,682,016	4,164,446	8,060,849
1950	10,812,532	2,566,913	13,887,420	27,266,865
1951	14,610,632	3,831,395	23,524,064	41,966,091

* See *The Times*, 30 May, 1953. N.B. the budgetary year was changed in 1951 from January–December to July–June.

† The statistics are taken from F.T.R. For *feddans* and *kantars* see note on p. 152. The figures in brackets are estimated yields per *feddan*.

‡ See F.T.R. for these figures also. Military equipment and supplies and imports by the Egyptian Government and by N.A.A.F.I. are excluded from the table.

EXPORTS AND RE-EXPORTS

	U.K. £E	Egypt £E	Other countries £E	Total £E
1921 . .	806,552	934,278	577,703	2,318,553
1931 . .	821,518	431,718	762,361	2,015,597
1941 . .	3,946,575	1,245,364	3,703,218	8,895,157
1950 . .	18,145,600	2,679,393	12,287,860	33,112,853
1951 . .	41,762,244	3,947,752	17,067,533	62,777,529 *

* Of the total figure for imports and exports combined (£E104,743,620) in 1951 £E95,555,645 travelled by way of the Red Sea (Port Sudan), £E4,107,271 *via* the northern Nile, and £E5,080,704 *via* frontier stations.

The principal components of the totals for 1951 were as follows:

IMPORTS	Tons	Value in £E	EXPORTS	Head	Value in £E
Cigarettes . . .	519	813,945	Cattle . .	27,980	491,331
Coal and coke . .	60,862	393,114	Camels . .	38,300*	1,185,000
Coffee	5,779	1,924,711	Sheep . .	50,900	207,035
Metals and manufactures	—	1,934,957		Tons	
Machinery and appliances	—	1,872,696	Cotton . .	95,485	45,533,636†
Oil fuel . . .	125,049	904,851	Cotton-seed .	112,091	3,830,478†
Piece goods . . .	58,582	10,081,872	Gum . .	41,044	3,471,611
Sacks and hessian . .	7,817	2,219,901	Hides and skins	5,102	1,253,946
Sugar, refined . .	59,747	3,731,252	Groundnuts .	14,276	821,914
Tea	5,302	1,493,835	Oilcake . .	31,475	661,976
Timber . . .	27,709	582,339	Pulses . .	17,013	727,681
Tyres, vehicles and transport equipment . .	—	3,180,932	Dates . .	7,993	270,937
			Maize . .	11,826	305,559

* Camels are exported on the hoof to Egypt and are not included in the customs statistics. Estimates are based on recorded sales in Egyptian markets.
† 'Free alongside ship' value, not 'f.o.b.'.

TRADE WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM (1951).

The largest contributions from U.K. were sugar, cotton piece goods, vehicles, machinery and metals, motor cars and bicycles, tobacco, pharmaceutical preparations, disinfectants etc. and fertilisers.

The chief export to U.K. was, of course, cotton. The value of this is computed at £E35,064,676 for ginned *sakel* cotton (70,170 tons), £E1,959,271 for ginned American (5,228 tons) and £E2,250,099 for cotton-seed (69,101 tons). Gum accounted for £E1,010,228 (11,556 tons), and hides and skins (mostly untanned) £E480,866 (1,965 tons).

TRADE WITH EGYPT (1951)

From Egypt came chiefly piece goods and clothing, footwear, perfumery etc., confectionery, cigarettes and tobacco, and foodstuffs such as rice. The main exports to Egypt were

camels, cattle and sheep, vegetables of various sorts, dates, cotton-seed and melon-seed, hides and skins.

Trade with Other Countries * (1951)

The chief features in terms of values were:

		£E	
India and Pakistan	Imports	6,910,700	Mostly cotton piece goods and jute.
	Exports	7,025,563	Mostly cotton and gum.
U.S.A.	Imports	1,192,715	Mostly motor cars, tractors, machinery and lubricating oils.
	Exports	1,313,515	Mostly *sakel* cotton and gum.
Abyssinia	Imports	1,193,022	Mostly coffee.
	Exports	378,589	Mostly American cotton and salt.
Persia	Imports	1,682,230	Mostly motor spirit and oils.
	Exports	763	Various.
Italy	Imports	1,885,084	Mostly artificial silk and other piece-goods and timber.
	Exports	1,001,934	Mostly cotton and gum.
France	Imports	660,466	Mostly glassware and perfumery.
	Exports	1,535,672	Mostly ground-nuts, gum and cotton.
Germany	Imports	557,166	Mostly cotton piece goods, beer, precious stones and hardware.
	Exports	1,121,593	Mostly cotton-seed, cotton, gum and maize.

The percentage in 1951 † of imports from, and the comparable percentages of exports to, the various countries abovementioned are given in the table on p. 176.

These figures are not, of course, comprehensive, but at least they make very clear the fact that the United Kingdom is the Sudan's best customer.

Certain five-year averages of main exports to all countries are also of interest:

	Cotton (tons)	Cotton-seed (tons)	Gum (tons)	Ground-nuts (tons)	Dates (tons)	Maize (tons)	Hides & Skins (tons)
1907–11	4,190	2,786	12,130	539	2,799	19	498
1917–21	3,538	6,266	14,091	2,806	4,060	868	1,203
1927–31	23,972	53,902	19,830	2,971	3,729	—	2,250
1937–41	63,334	77,584	21,212	5,754	3,840	1,913	2,637
1947–51	66,014	98,461	34,869	6,409	6,705	13,245	3,910

* Only those countries which reach the million mark with exports or imports are here included. It is worthy of note from the political angle that trade with Israel has practically ceased of late years.

† Only those in excess of £E1,000,000 in value are included.

	Value in £E	U.K.	Egypt	India and Pakistan	Persia	U.S.A. and Canada	Italy	Abyssinia	Germany	France
A. Imports:										
Food products, beverages and tobacco	11,117,560	35·9	2·5	2·6	—	0·3	0·9	10·6	0·6	0·2
Chemicals	2,377,833	73·8	10·0	3·9	—	0·1	0·7	—	0·8	3·1
Textiles	10,646,330	19·4	17·4	41·6	—	—	7·1	—	2·2	1·2
Clothing, etc.	3,257,084	8·1	16·9	57·2	—	—	7·1	—	—	0·4
Products for heating, lighting and power, and lubricants	2,546,410	11·9	2·0	3·2	65·7	4·1	0·4	—	—	—
Base metals and manufactures	3,025,412	48·8	2·5	3·4	0·1	3·1	3·9	—	3·3	3·5
Machinery, apparatus and vehicles	4,605,233	72·6	1·1	0·1	—	17·7	3·7	—	0·9	0·7
B. Exports:										
Food products, etc.	3,136,894	18·0	58·1	4·8	—	—	0·6	—	2·8	0·1
Fats and waxes	6,155,098	39·8	26·7	—	—	0·2	—	—	13·5	10·5
Hides, skins and leather	1,292,376	39·4	19·4	—	—	14·3	3·9	1·6	0·9	6·9
Cotton and textiles	46,534,848	79·6	—	14·3	—	1·1	1·2	—	0·3	0·8
Miscellaneous, including gum	3,831,445	27·7	2·0	6·1	—	17·0	7·5	—	1·5	11·3

A note of caution is called for in conclusion. The post-war boom has spent its force. Political complications, the risks attendant upon over-hasty 'sudanisation' of the staff, and the likelihood of labour troubles, all point to uncertainty in respect to the future. The phenomenal rapidity of progress which has marked recent years cannot continue at the same rate, and the best one can hope for is that a wise caution may bring stability.

PART THREE

POLITICS

Chapter 14

Politics. Stage I: to July, 1947

UNTIL the close of the First World War, politics played little part in the Sudan. Egypt, too, remained quiescent under British control and little interested in what happened beyond the southern border. The British declaration of a Protectorate over Egypt in 1914 was, however, resented as a humiliation, and the war-time restrictions and impositions—of which full advantage was taken by petty officials—led to unpopularity of the British among the peasantry. Nationalism grew apace and found encouragement in the Wilsonian creed of 'self-determination'. Zaghlul Pasha organised the *Wafd* as a delegation to lay Egypt's case before the Peace Conference, and public opinion was spurred to make itself felt. It did so by a campaign of riot and murder which cost a number of British lives. Behind the campaign lay several motives: the foremost was a genuine desire for independence; but there was also an increasing fear that, even if this were achieved, it would be stultified by the British control of the Sudan, and consequently of Egypt's water supplies. The raising of the Aswan dam in 1912 had given promise of a great expansion of perennial irrigation, and the support given by His Majesty's Government to the Sennar dam project, on which work had been started in 1914 with the aid of a British guarantee, and the progress being made with cotton-growing in the Gezira,* gave colour to fear and suspicion and stimulus to the demand that the economic development of the Sudan, which was regarded locally as an annexe of Egypt, should be postponed until that of Egypt itself had been completed, and that thereafter the Sudan should be developed only so far as this could be done without detriment to Egyptian interests, irrigational and commercial, and preferably by rain-cultivation.† The effect that this attitude must have on Sudanese public opinion received no

* See Chap. 12.

† Cf. R.I.I.A. *Survey*, 1925, Vol. 1, pp. 254–5.

attention at all, and the cry continued for the restoration of the Sudan to Egyptian rule.

The Milner Commission of 1920 was primarily concerned with Egypt's future rather than that of the Sudan, but its report * did not fail to make clear that the case of the Sudan must be treated as entirely distinct, and that while nothing must be done to impede its development, the vital interests of Egypt must be amply safeguarded. It was added that

> 'the contiguity of Egypt and the Sudan and their common interest in the Nile make it desirable that some political nexus between the two countries should always be maintained, but it is out of the question that this connection should take the form of the subjection of the Sudan to Egypt. The former country is capable of and entitled to independent development in accordance with its own character and requirements. It is much too early to attempt to determine its ultimate political status.'

And again:

> 'Egypt has an indefeasible right to an ample and assured supply of water for the land at present under cultivation, and to a fair share of any increased supply which engineering skill may be able to provide. A formal declaration on the part of Great Britain that she recognises this right and is resolved under all circumstances to uphold it would go far to allay the uneasiness which prevails in Egypt on this subject.'

This did not satisfy the Egyptians, and their propagandists for the next three years conducted an insidious campaign in the Sudan in order to stir up trouble there as an accompaniment to violence in Egypt and negotiations with the British Government. On 28 February, 1922, the negotiations, but not the violence, were brought to a close by a British unilateral declaration terminating the Protectorate subject to certain reservations, of which one was the future status of the Sudan, and the rest concerned the defence of Egypt, the security of empire communications and the protection of foreign interests. The next day Egypt was declared an independent sovereign state and the Sultan took the title of King.

This again failed to satisfy nationalist ambitions, and the

* Egypt No. 1 (1921), *Cmd.* 1131.

attempt was made—and rejected by the British Government—in framing the constitution in 1923 to use the term 'King of Egypt and the Sudan' and to lay down that 'the Sudan forms an integral part of the Egyptian Kingdom'. Zaghlul was adamant on these points, and by 1924 had reached the point of declaring, 'Le Soudan est à nous et nous devons l'avoir. Nous devons en disposer comme le propriétaire dispose de son bien,' * and again, *à propos* of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's invitation to hold discussions in London, 'Si je peux partir pour mener les négociations, je dirai que le Soudan est notre propriété, qu'il est une partie indissoluble de l'Egypte et qu'il doit nous être rendu.' The visit took place in September, 1924, but, since Zaghlul maintained his intransigence on all the 'reserved' points and Great Britain declined to give way, it was completely abortive.

In the Sudan, Egyptian propaganda and intrigue had not been without effect. In May, 1922, a young officer in a Sudanese battalion, 'Ali 'Abd el Latif, a product of the military school, born in Egypt of slave parentage, published a document entitled 'The Claims of the Sudanese Nation', and in 1924 founded a 'White Flag League'.† This ostensibly Sudanese movement was in fact sponsored, organised and controlled by Egyptian officers and officials, though ex-students of the Gordon College and other youths were ready to join it and take part in public demonstrations on the approved Egyptian model. Riots followed in some of the larger towns, but neither the rank and file of the army nor the tribesmen of the provinces were interested. In June 'Ali 'Abd el Latif was imprisoned. This was the prelude to an intensification of effort, and in August cadets of the Military School paraded the streets of Khartoum; at Atbara the Egyptian railway battalion mutinied, but they were dealt with by Arab mounted infantry and British troops, disbanded and sent back to Egypt. These events, coinciding with the troubles in Egypt and the murder of British subjects, led to a firm pronouncement by Ramsay MacDonald in October asserting the determination of His Majesty's Government to take all necessary steps in support of the Sudan Government and the preservation of order. 'There can be', he said, 'no

* *La Bourse Egyptienne*, 6 June, 1924.

† The flag showed the Nile on a white ground with a copy of an Egyptian flag in one corner and the word 'forward' in Arabic.

question of their abandoning the Sudan until their work is done.'*

The climax was reached on 19 November, 1924, when Sir Lee Stack, the Governor-General of the Sudan and Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, was murdered in Cairo by Egyptians on his way from the War Office. In the Sudan, as in Great Britain, the effect was one of angry amazement and grief. In Egypt, Lord Allenby, as High Commissioner, on 22 November delivered an ultimatum to Zaghlul couched in terms of unmeasured frankness and demanding an ample apology, energetic inquiry and punishment of the criminals, the cessation of popular political demonstrations, the payment of a fine of £500,000 and also that the Egyptian Government:

> '(5) Order within twenty-four hours the withdrawal from the Sudan of all Egyptian officers and the purely Egyptian units of the Egyptian Army, with such resulting changes as shall be hereafter specified:
>
> '(6) Notify the competent department that the Sudan Government will increase the area to be irrigated in the Gezira from 300,000 *feddans* to an unlimited figure as need may arise:
>
> '(7) withdraw all opposition . . . to the wishes of His Majesty's Government concerning the protection of foreign interests in Egypt.
>
> 'Failing immediate compliance with these demands [the note continued] His Majesty's Government will at once take appropriate action to safeguard their interests in Egypt and the Sudan.'

A second communiqué at the same time defined more closely the fifth and seventh demands, and in respect to the former the wording was:

> 'The Egyptian officers and purely Egyptian units of the Egyptian Army having been withdrawn, Sudanese units of the Egyptian Army shall be converted into a Sudan Defence Force owing allegiance to the Sudan Government alone and under the supreme command of the Governor-General, in whose name all commissions will be given.'

* Egypt No. 1 (1924), *Cmd.* 2269.

Zaghlul's Government accepted the first four demands, rejected the remainder, and resigned on 24 November.* The fifth demand was at once the subject of a direct instruction to the Sudan Government to evacuate the Egyptian officers and men of the Egyptian Army from the Sudan. This was no simple task and was only carried out by the British garrison and Sudanese elements of the Egyptian Army under the command of General Huddleston,† the acting Sirdar, after violent trouble in some of the out-districts, an outbreak of political prisoners from the gaol and a mutiny roused by the Egyptian officers among certain Sudanese units at Khartoum who invaded a hospital and murdered two Englishmen, two Syrians and three Egyptians. The Sudanese units in Omdurman and Khartoum North took no part in the mutiny, nor, save in their rôle as prompters, did the Egyptians.

The Sudan Defence Force, formed of Arab and Sudanese units previously belonging to the Egyptian Army, was inaugurated on 17 January, 1925; and so came to an end the anomaly by which the British Governor-General of the Sudan was also Sirdar of the Egyptian Army both in Egypt and the Sudan. So long as Egypt had been under British control this had not mattered, but with the declaration in February, 1922, of Egypt as a sovereign state the position had entirely changed, and the new Ministry of War, now separated from that of Public Works, to which it had been affiliated, was naturally inclined to assert its position in relation to its Commander-in-Chief. In effect, this took the form of obstruction and the undermining of discipline. The formation of the Sudan Defence Force gave practical recognition to the fact that a new element having been introduced into the relationship between the Co-domini, a new machinery was required to ensure that the garrison of the Sudan was at the sole disposal of the Governor-General. Egypt was by no means reluctant, on political grounds, to pay the cost of the new force, for it was felt that the value of a paymaster's hold was not to be ignored and that some overt advertisement was needed of Egypt's continuing part in the Condominium—which, it was known, had been in considerable danger of being terminated by the summary removal of the Egyptian flag at the time of

* Zaghlul was succeeded by Ziwar Pasha at the head of a non-*Wafd* Cabinet.

† *q.v.*, p. 95.

the evacuation of the Egyptian troops.* Great Britain, for her part, was ready to allow Egypt to make a payment which was a logical consequence of the obligations resulting from the Condominium Agreement, but no more. After some negotiation, the annual contribution was fixed at £E750,000, and this was paid from 1925 to 1937 † as the equivalent of Egypt's previous army expenses. A compromise was adopted whereby Egypt described her contribution as being for military purposes, and the Sudan Government accepted it for general purposes.

The sixth demand in the ultimatum was unquestionably a grave mistake, for, apart from the appearance of seeking profit from the crime committed, it served to confirm the most inveterate of Egyptian suspicions—that the British intended to interfere with Egypt's water supply. Allenby's motive was the simple one of wishing to frighten the Egyptians as much as possible, and no attempt was in fact made to do more in respect to the Gezira than to appoint in January, 1925, the commission of British and Egyptian experts under an independent chairman which examined the whole question and paved the way for the Nile Waters Agreement of 1929.‡

The storms which followed the murder of Sir Lee Stack and the removal of the Egyptian Army from the Sudan, together with a progressive reduction in the number of Egyptian officials, were followed by a decade of quiet in that country, and much progress in the development of indirect rule through the agency of tribal and territorial rulers. In Egypt also there were a few years of comparative calm with the *Wafd* relegated to the background.

In July, 1927, Sarwat Pasha, then Prime Minister, visited London in an attempt to resolve the perennial problem of Anglo-Egyptian relationship, and definite progress was made —the issue of the political status of the Sudan being 'reserved'

* See Wavell, *Allenby in Egypt*, p. 117. On 15 December, Sir A. Chamberlain, speaking as Foreign Secretary in the House of Commons, said, 'We have no desire to terminate the Condominium. If . . . the Government of Egypt will work with us, we will recognise it and be loyal to it.'

† See p. 169 for the position after 1937.

‡ See p. 148. Allenby had been unable to get the Foreign Office comments upon the terms of his proposed demands before delivering them, and when they were subsequently received they were found to omit the indemnity and modify the terms of the clause concerning the Gezira. See Wavell, *loc. cit.*, pp. 112–14.

as usual; but on his return he found the *Wafd*, under the leadership of Nahas, who had lately succeeded Zaghlul,* entirely opposed to acceptance of the terms agreed upon and strong enough to prevent their implementation and force his resignation. The situation reverted to that of 1924 and the anglophobes remained in power until June, 1928, when an internal scandal led to the dismissal of Nahas by the King and his replacement by the Liberal Mohammed Mahmud. Parliament was dissolved in July for three years, leaving Mahmud a virtual dictator. In the following year he visited London to take soundings on the various points at issue and agreed with the suggestion that an attempt might now be made to tackle the whole problem in the better atmosphere prevailing. As a result, a draft treaty was drawn up and approved by both parties on 3 August, 1929. The points particularly affecting the Sudan were two: †

> (i) Mahmud having pressed that Egyptian troops should be re-admitted to the Sudan, His Majesty's Government engaged that, if the treaty was worked in a friendly spirit, they would 'examine sympathetically a proposal for the return to the Sudan of an Egyptian battalion simultaneously with the withdrawal of the British forces from Cairo'.
>
> (ii) As regards the status of the Sudan, the draft clause read, 'While reserving liberty to conclude new conventions in future modifying the conventions of 1899, the High Contracting Parties agree that the status of the Sudan shall be that resulting from the said conventions.‡ Accordingly, the Governor-General shall continue to exercise on the joint behalf of the High Contracting Parties the powers conferred upon him by the said conventions.'

The *Wafd* held its hand pending the elections which Mahmud had promised in order to obtain a popular verdict on the proposed treaty, gave no lead upon the treaty issue at all and

* Zaghlul died in August, 1927.

† *Cmd.* 3376 (1929). Other points were concerned with finance and the application of international conventions to the Sudan.

‡ The ambiguity of 'that resulting from' which periodically recurs in drafts, has never been resolved. Is it the equivalent of 'that logically consequential upon' or 'that which has in fact resulted from'?

concentrated their attack upon Mahmud personally for having usurped power in Egypt. Mahmud resigned in October and was succeeded by 'Adli Pasha. Elections were held in December, and resulted in the return of Nahas to power with a sweeping majority. He formed his Government on 1 January, 1930, received a mandate to reopen negotiations and proceeded to London for the purpose.

The basis of discussion was the draft treaty of the previous year, and agreement was eventually reached on everything except the Sudan. On that subject two points presented insuperable obstacles—the old problem of Egyptian sovereignty and the subsidiary question of the right of Egyptian nationals to immigrate without restriction into the Sudan.* On both points a deadlock was reached, and the negotiations ended on 8 May and Nahas returned to Egypt. A month later he quarrelled with the King and was succeeded by Isma'il Sidki Pasha, an old enemy of the *Wafd* and an extremely able and astute administrator-politician. The elections held in the summer of 1931 were boycotted by the *Wafd*, and Sidki's party was returned with a large majority and set itself to the long-overdue task of administrative and financial reform. With the succession of ministries and constitutional changes which followed in Egypt during the next five years we are not concerned,† and politics to the Sudanese were still of less interest than the economic and social developments which were taking place so rapidly.

In the autumn of 1935 domestic politics in Egypt were overshadowed by the effect of the Italo-Abyssinian crisis. This and the threat of the Berlin–Rome axis to the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal necessitated a clarification of the anomalous relation with Great Britain in respect to the defence of Egypt. After an initial wave of anti-British feeling, the problem was approached in a more conciliatory frame of mind on both sides, and the leading politicians of Egypt, hitherto at loggerheads, expressed their readiness to conclude a treaty on the lines which had been agreed in 1930. At first matters moved slowly, owing to the complications of Egyptian politics, but when elections had been held in May, 1936, and Nahas returned victorious at the head of a *Wafd* ministry,

* See below, p. 190.

† For these and subsequent developments see R.I.I.A., *Survey*, 1936; pp. 662 ff., and *G.B. and E.*, pp. 33 ff.

conversations were opened. The military clauses were disposed of by 24 July and a treaty of alliance signed on 26 August, 1936. It remains in force. In the light of present-day fulminations against its terms, it is interesting to note that it was signed by representatives of virtually every party in Egypt, including Nokrashi Pasha, who was to denounce it so violently before the Security Council in 1947, that it was approved in Cairo by overwhelming majorities, was enthusiastically welcomed by the press and was the occasion of ovations for Nahas by the populace. The treaty of 1936 * was for twenty years (though a review after ten years by joint consent was allowed for), after which either party could initiate negotiations for its revision. Failing agreement, arbitration was to be resorted to. The terms regarding mutual aid and the stationing of British troops in the Canal Zone need not be given here, nor those concerning the abolition of the 'capitulations'† which are not relevant to the Sudan.

Article 11 read as follows:

> '(i) While reserving liberty to conclude new conventions in future, modifying the agreements of the 19th January and the 10th July, 1899 ‡ the High Contracting parties agree that the administration § of the Sudan shall continue to be that resulting from the said agreements. The Governor-General shall continue to exercise on the joint behalf of the High Contracting Parties the powers conferred upon him by the said agreements.
>
> 'The High Contracting Parties agree that the primary aim of their administration in the Sudan must be the welfare of the Sudanese. Nothing in this article prejudices the question of sovereignty over the Sudan.
>
> '(ii) Appointments and promotions of officials in the Sudan will in consequence remain vested in the Governor-General, who, in making new appointments to posts for which qualified Sudanese are not available, will select suitable candidates of British and Egyptian nationality.
>
> '(iii) In addition to Sudanese troops, both British and

* For the text see *Cmd.* 5360 reprinted in R.I.I.A., *G.B. and E.*, App. III. Egypt also became a member of the League of Nations in May, 1937.

† *q.v.*, p. 63.

‡ *i.e.* the Condominium Agreements, *q.v.* in Chap. 6.

§ Note 'administration' *vice* 'status' as in the 1929 draft.

Egyptian troops shall be placed at the disposal of the Governor-General for the defence of the Sudan.

'(iv) Egyptian immigration into the Sudan shall be unrestricted except for reasons of public order or health.

'(v) There shall be no discrimination in the Sudan between British subjects and Egyptian nationals in matters of commerce, immigration or the possession of property.

'(vi) The High Contracting Parties are agreed on the provisions set out in the Annex * to this Article as regards the method by which international conventions are to be made applicable to the Sudan.'

The parties to the treaty simultaneously signed an agreed minute recording certain points of interpretation. So far as Article 11 was concerned, the point of most particular interest to the Sudanese in the minute was in the words referring to sub-paragraph (ii), namely 'The promotion and advancement of members of the Sudan Service shall be irrespective of nationality up to any rank by selection in accordance with individual merits'.

Two points in Article 11 itself are worthy of note. In the first place, the principle that the welfare of the Sudanese was the primary aim of the administration had always been accepted by the British Government and that of the Sudan: Egypt had not previously committed herself, and the interpretation of the wording led to much dispute at later stages. In the second place, the freeing of Egyptians from any restrictions upon immigration except for reasons of public order or health was more of a concession to *amour propre* than to any practical intention on the part of the Egyptians. It is true that Egypt was rapidly becoming over-populated,† but, on the other hand, whatever facilities or inducements have been offered from the time of the re-occupation of the Sudan until the present day, there has never been any disposition to migrate to the 'more unpleasant climate of the Sudan'.‡ The position was therefore in practice unaffected by the treaty of 1936.

Whether, after the achievement of full independence by the Sudanese, they will welcome Egyptian immigrants remains

* *Not given.*

† See Abbas, pp. 89–90, for some remarkable figures.

‡ Cromer's *Annual Report on the Sudan* for 1902, *q.v.* (p. 16) for early days. For the present day see Abbas, p. 92.

an open question. This depends chiefly on the kind of immigrant envisaged. The political danger of the creation of a 'fifth column' will have been lessened and many advantages would accrue to the Sudan from the provision (with adequate medical safeguards) of this additional supply of highly efficient labour for agriculture. To Egypt, the relief from one of her most serious problems would be of obvious value; but if she were to think in terms of landowners, rather than labour, the answer would be a very different one.

It need hardly be said that the signature of the treaty did not damp Egypt's zeal in asserting her rights to the Sudan on the ground that the Condominium Agreements were concerned only with methods of administration, and in no way prejudiced her rights of sovereignty; but other preoccupations prevented the issue from being forced for a time.

In the Sudan the course of the 1936 negotiations was watched with intense interest by the educated minority, who had every intention of exploiting its implications. Cotton had brought wealth to the country; wealth had provided the means for widespread education; education had stirred up hopes and ambitions hitherto unrealisable. Nationalism took realistic shape and a determination grew to make clear to both the Co-domini that a third party had entered the lists and meant to assert itself. The first move was the formation in 1937 of a Graduates' Congress, which, though professing in the first instance not to be concerned with politics, rapidly discarded the camouflage and concentrated attention upon them. Their initial approaches to the Sudan Government were courteous, and the response was in kind, but it was of course impossible to accept the implied thesis that a congress of graduates was entitled to speak for the whole country. The situation remained quiescent until February, 1940, when 'Ali Maher, the Prime Minister of Egypt, paid a visit to the Sudan at the invitation of the Governor-General and was entertained by the graduates.* They took the opportunity to appeal to him for financial assistance, and he was not slow to perceive and exploit their potential value for his political

* See Duncan, pp. 193 ff., and R.I.I.A., *Survey*, 1939–46, pp. 36–7. 'Ali Maher was placed under arrest in March, 1942, by Nahas (whom the British Ambassador had forced upon the King as Prime Minister in the previous month) on suspicion of dealing with the enemy. See R.I.I.A., *G.B. and E.*, p. 74. Sir Stewart Symes had succeeded Sir John Maffey as Governor-General in 1934.

purposes. By 1942 all pretence of their aims being non-political had been shed and the graduates were demanding, *inter alia*, guarantees for the Sudan as a whole of 'the right of self-determination directly after the war', and the creation of a Sudanese representative body to approve finance and legislation.* The determination of rival religious leaders to capture the congress for their own ends, coupled with the rejection of its demands, led to a split in its ranks. The more moderate elements lost control and seceded, and the rest merged themselves into the extreme pro-Egyptian group, the Ashigga ('Blood-brothers'), which had recently been formed with the avowed intention of uniting the Nile Valley under the crown of Egypt.

Meanwhile, as we have seen in an earlier chapter,† it had been decided, as a first move, to set up an Advisory Council for the northern Sudan with thirty members, of whom twenty-nine were to be Sudanese, with intent that, if successful, it should evolve into a Legislative Council. This, representing the first formal step on the part of the Sudanese on the road to self-government, was inaugurated on 16 May, 1944, but the exclusion of the southern Sudan from its scope caused suspicion among the younger intelligentsia of the north, and, moreover, this class took an unfavourable view of the constitution of the Council, for the eighteen provincial members were for the most part tribal sheikhs whose general outlook did not coincide with their own. The Egyptian press, for their part, were inspired to grumble at Egypt's not having been consulted nor represented on the Council and to make fresh demands for the recognition of Egypt and the Sudan as a single nation.

In February, 1945, a second and more influential party came into being in the Sudan with aims diametrically opposed to those of the Ashigga in respect to Egypt. This was the *Umma*,‡ under the patronship of Sayed Sir 'Ábd el Rahman, the posthumous son of the Mahdi, which stood for independence untrammelled by any ties with Great Britain or Egypt, except those of friendly relationship. It would, however, be a mistake to assume that the basic difference between

* See Abbas, p. 109. † See p. 111.

‡ Duncan (*q.v.*, p. 196) translates this 'The People's Party'. The word has, however, a wider connotation as 'the single indivisible Islamic "nation" '. (See Hourani in R.I.I.A., *International Affairs*, January, 1953, p. 24.) It is more commonly known as the 'Independence Party'.

the two main groups—those ostensibly favouring the Egyptian connection and those opposing it—was purely political. The cleavage was deeper and its real nature was merely concealed behind a convenient cloak. Fundamentally, the issue was religious and personal. To the 'pro-Egyptians' the Mahdi had been a pretender; they or their fathers had suffered grievously during the Dervish period (some of them taking refuge in Egypt) and they were determined never to recognise the son, whom they suspected of cherishing the ambition to become King of the Sudan, as their leader, but rather to remain faithful to the more orthodox tenets as represented by Sayed Sir 'Ali el Mirghani, head of the Khatmia *tarika*.* The schism was as marked as that between Sunni and Shi'a, Protestant and Roman Catholic, and more analogous to that between Christian and Jew. The *Umma* were numerous and commanded much support among the more warlike tribesmen of the western provinces, and they were well supplied with funds of their own—largely derived from the cotton estates held by the Mahdi's son and his followers on Abba Island and the White Nile. The 'Unity' group, on the other hand, were fewer in number, their influence was strong only in the north and east and lay chiefly among the townsmen and the educated classes. Their own financial resources were inconsiderable. Orthodoxy and impecuniosity compelled them to seek assistance from elsewhere and their hopes centred upon Egypt, less from any affection felt for that country or dislike of the British than from fear of being dominated by their hated rivals. They preferred, in brief, to see the Sudan under the crown of Farouk rather than risk the possibility of its assumption by 'Abd el Rahman.† This background of motives requires to be kept clearly in mind when viewing the drama which has occupied the political stage of the Sudan for the last quarter of a century.

Towards the end of 1945 the British Government agreed to reopen negotiations ‡ with Egypt, then under the premier-

* *i.e.*, 'path to salvation'.

† Abbas, p. 10. The southern Sudan, it need hardly be added, was uninterested in these dynastic and religious rivalries.

‡ Though the 1936 treaty had been for twenty years, it was provided that negotiations for its revision might be opened, with the consent of both parties, at any time after ten years, and the Egyptian Government had made approaches for this purpose some months before that period expired.

ship of Nokrashi Pasha.* This led to an uneasy truce being engineered between the Independence and Unity groups by more moderate elements of the Graduates' Congress, and a formula was devised which could be taken to Cairo by a joint delegation to express the desires of the Sudan as a whole. This included the setting up of a free Sudanese democratic government in union with Egypt and in alliance with Great Britain,† the precise form of union and alliance being left to the Sudanese themselves, and the appointment of a joint Committee to make proposals for handing over government to the Sudanese as quickly as possible. The delegation proceeded to Cairo in March, 1946, but found that the Egyptians of all parties took the Ashigga view and insisted upon an undefined but permanent unity of the two countries under the Egyptian crown. The Independence Group therefore returned to Khartoum, leaving the Ashigga, led by Isma'il el Azhari, in Cairo.

At the same time (26 March) Mr. Bevin, as Foreign Secretary, made a statement in the House of Commons:

> 'His Majesty's Government look forward to the day when the Sudanese will be able finally to decide their political future for themselves. . . . The welfare of the Sudanese cannot be secured unless a stable and disinterested administration is maintained in the Sudan. The objects of such an administration must be to establish organs of self-government as a first step towards eventual independence, to accelerate the process of appointing Sudanese to higher Government posts in consultation with Sudanese representatives, and to raise the capacity of the mass of the people for effective citizenship. These are the two objects of the present Sudan Government, and His Majesty's Government fully support them. In the meantime, His Majesty's Government consider that no change should be made in the status of the Sudan as a result of treaty revision until the Sudanese have been consulted through constitutional channels.'

These assurances were repeated by the Governor-General to the Advisory Council on 17 April and were well received.

* Nahas had been dismissed by the King in October, 1944, and succeeded by the Sa'adist Ahmed Maher. The latter was assassinated in February, 1945, and succeeded by Nokrashi.

† See Abbas, p. 111.

Unfortunately, as will be seen, the very important words 'through constitutional channels'—repeated by the Foreign Secretary in the House of Commons in the following January —were ignored in 1952/53 by the acceptance of the views of Sudanese political parties without reference to the constitutional authority which was in being, namely the Executive Council.*

After the Cairo *débâcle*, all pretence of agreement between the two main parties in the Sudan was dropped, and on each subsequent occasion when Anglo-Egyptian discussions took place, whether in London or before the Security Council at Lake Success, each sent its own representatives.

Meanwhile, the Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan had asked for and received in November, 1945, a pledge from the Governor-General that the future of the Sudan would not be settled without their being consulted, and in the course of 1946 a Sudan Administrative Conference was opened by him, including all shades of opinion except the Ashigga, who declined to participate, to study ways and means of associating the Sudanese more fully with the conduct of central and local government.†

While these discussions were in train at Khartoum—the outcome will be dealt with later—protracted Anglo-Egyptian negotiations were being held in Cairo.‡ Stalemate was, as usual, reached on the subject of the Sudan; but in October, 1946, Sidki Pasha went to London and held meetings with Mr. Bevin. A solution of the controversy finally seemed to be in sight. A draft treaty was initialled in which, after settling the clauses relating purely to Egypt and Middle East defence —including a promise to evacuate Cairo, Alexandria and the Delta, by 31 March, 1947, and the rest of Egypt by 1 September, 1949—the matter of the Sudan was tackled. An ingenious ambiguity was devised in a 'draft Sudan protocol' and read as follows:

> 'The policy which the High Contracting Parties undertake to follow in the Sudan, within the framework of the unity between the Sudan and Egypt, will

* As mentioned earlier (p. 113), the Legislative Assembly was not available for consultations after 23 October, 1952.

† For the steps taken in respect of local government see p. 114.

‡ The *Wafd* refused to take part, though invited by Sidki Pasha, now Premier, to do so, and this involved British negotiations with a minority Government. Sidki had succeeded Nokrashi in February, 1946.

have for its essential objectives to assure the well-being of the Sudanese, the development of their interests and their active preparation for self-government, and consequently the exercise of the right to choose the future status of the Sudan. Until the High Contracting Parties can, in full common agreement, realise this latter objective, after consultation with the Sudanese, the Agreement of 1899 will continue, and Article 11 of the Treaty of 1936 . . . will remain in force.'

Speaking later in the House of Commons, Bevin said,* in elaboration of this theme:

'Of the questions in dispute, by far the most difficult was that of the Sudan. My own position in the matter was that I had given a pledge in this House on March 26 last that no change should be made in the status of the Sudan as a result of treaty revision until the Sudanese had been consulted through constitutional channels. After taking, however, the highest legal advice, I felt that, for the sake of an agreement which would have been as much in the interests of the Sudan as of either of the other parties, I should be justified in alluding in the Sudan protocol to the existence of a symbolic dynastic union between Egypt and the Sudan, provided always that no change was introduced into the existing system of administration . . . and provided that no change took place in the arrangements under which the defence of the Sudan is assured.'

This talk of 'unity between the Sudan and Egypt' too obviously savoured of the bogus and was recognised as an evasion of the issue in both countries. In Egypt Sidki let the phrase be interpreted as conceding his claims without the Sudanese having any right of choice in the matter, until the British Prime Minister on 28 October, 1946, stated in contradiction that 'no change in the existing status and administration of the Sudan is contemplated and no impairment of the right of the Sudanese people ultimately to decide their own future'. In the Sudan the draft protocol was regarded as a betrayal, and nothing could induce the Advisory Council, which was composed mainly of the Independence Party

* See *The Times*, 28 January, 1947.

(*Umma*), to believe that it was anything else. The words used implied to them, as they were bound to do, that the King of Egypt was recognised as being also King of the Sudan—and they did not want him. Feelings ran very high in both countries as discrepant explanations and disavowals by the protagonists followed one another. In Egypt the *Wafd* stirred up the mob to demonstrate and the press to conduct a campaign, supported by highly fallacious appeals to history and ridiculous anthropological arguments and directed to a revival of the old fear that Egypt's water supply was in danger, and Sidki was compelled to resign on 9 December. In the Sudan strong resentment was evinced by British officials, a number of whom were prepared to resign their posts; the *Umma* party threatened to boycott the Advisory Council, disorders broke out in Khartoum and Omdurman, and the Mahdi's son flew to England to see the Prime Minister.

Fortunately, at this juncture the strong figure of General Huddleston was at the helm of government, commanding universal trust and respect. He also flew to London to acquaint the British Government with the crisis into which the offending clause and its implications were likely to plunge the country, and was able to obtain from the Prime Minister authority to assure the Sudanese that

> 'His Majesty's Government are . . . determined that nothing shall be permitted to deflect the Sudan Government, whose constitution and powers remain unaltered by the recent conversations, from the task to which that Government have applied themselves—the preparation of the Sudanese for self-government and for the task of choosing freely what their future status is to be.' *

It was officially added in London by way of explanation that

> 'All the British Government are endeavouring to do is to establish that, when the time is ripe for the Sudanese to choose their future, they shall be free to say, if they so desire, that they choose the status of an independent state. Clearly this is only one of the choices open to them. For example, they may choose union with Egypt. But it would be manifestly impossible for any British Government to acquiesce in an interpretation of a treaty with

* See R.I.I.A., *G.B. and E.*, p. 96.

> Egypt . . . which denies one of the fundamental rights of free people—a right which Egypt has never ceased to claim for herself.' *

These statements had the effect of restoring order and a measure of confidence in the Sudan. Full confidence could not survive the Bevin–Sidki formula.

Sidki was followed as Prime Minister of Egypt by Nokrashi at the head of a coalition government. He lost no time in defining his attitude. On 16 December he told the Chamber of Deputies—and Bevin quoted the words—'When I say unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown, I mean a permanent unity. I hope that the whole world will understand that I am expressing the opinion of all Egyptians and all Sudanese.' † It was obvious that the draft protocol with its elaborate ambiguity was null and void, and strenuous efforts by the British Government having failed to placate the Egyptians, the House of Commons was informed (27 January) that the Egyptian Government had broken off negotiations for a revision of the 1936 Treaty—not only in respect of the Sudan, but of the military clauses as well. It is indeed a measure of the importance which Egypt attached to her claims in respect to the Sudan that she was willing on account of it to forgo even the evacuation by a definite date of the British troops whose presence upon her soil she has so violently denounced at all times, except those of immediate danger.‡ It can only be supposed that the Egyptians calculated that the Security Council would 'see justice done', *i.e.* give them all they wanted, and that any concessions were therefore unnecessary.

On 26 January, 1947, Nokrashi stated his intention to take 'the whole question of Egypt and the Sudan to the United Nations'. The next day Mr. Bevin said that all his efforts to reach an agreed interpretation of the Sudan protocol had failed:

> 'I have offered every guarantee for the safeguard of Egyptian interests in the Sudan—for no one realises more clearly than His Majesty's Government how vital, for instance, is Egyptian interest in the waters of the Nile —I have offered to sign the treaty of mutual assistance and the evacuation protocol and thus realise one of

* *Id.* p. 97. † *Id.* p. 98. ‡ *Cf.* Abbas, p. 119.

Egypt's most eager aspirations—and to discuss the Sudan question *de novo* at a conference with ourselves, the Egyptians and the Sudanese. To all these proposals I have received either an uncompromising negative or proposals which would involve my re-entering negotiations committed to the thesis that the right of the Sudanese to self-determination must be subject to permanent union between Egypt and the Sudan. . . .'

While matters were thus as between Great Britain and Egypt, the Sudan Government continued its policy of training the Sudanese for self-government. As we have seen it had already in the previous year set up an Administrative Conference to study ways and means. The outcome was a recommendation made by the Sudan Government in July, 1947, a week before the Egyptian case came before the Security Council, to form a predominantly Sudanese Legislative Assembly and Executive Council to supersede the Advisory Council and represent the whole Sudan, including the pagan south. More will be said of this in the following chapter after dealing first with the deliberations of the Security Council.

Chapter 15

Politics. Stage II : July, 1947, to January, 1952

NOKRASHI duly carried out his threat to submit the Anglo-Egyptian dispute to the United Nations in July, 1947, demanding 'the total and complete evacuation of British troops from Egypt, including the Sudan', and 'the termination of the present administrative régime of the Sudan'.* His case was debated from 5 August to 10 September under the chairmanship of Syria, and finally of Russia.†

So far as the Sudan was concerned he was on a singularly bad wicket, for if any one principle was dearer than another to the United Nations, and particularly to those states to whom Nokrashi looked for support, it was that of self-determination and the freedom of all peoples to choose their own destiny. Conceal it as she might, Egypt was denying this freedom to the Sudanese, and the British were conceding it. Nokrashi might expect sympathy for his plea that the presence of British troops on Egyptian territory, though covered by a formal treaty, was an offence; but to argue, as he did, that the power so gained was being used to 'sever the Sudan from Egypt . . . creating discord between the Sudanese and the Egyptians and dissension among the Sudanese themselves, and instigating and encouraging artificial separatist movements' with intent 'to impair the unity of the Nile Valley . . .', was, to say the least of it, unconvincing. Moreover, as the British representative, Sir A. Cadogan, pointed out, if the Egyptian case for incorporating the Sudan into Egypt was to be based upon the fact that the Sudan was in a position to interfere with Egypt's water supply, the argument was applicable

* Letter to the Secretary General.

† Separate Sudanese delegations attended representing the rival parties, in addition to four British advisers from the Sudan Government. The *verbatim* records of the discussions of the Security Council at the 175th ,176th, 179th, 182nd, 189th, 193rd, 198th, 200th and 201st meetings have been reprinted by the Sudan Government with an Arabic translation.

also to Abyssinia, Uganda and the Belgian Congo. As we have seen,* the Sudan is only a pipeline through which the Nile flows, and its waters come from far beyond.

The grotesquely inaccurate and tendentious historical and ethnological arguments † adduced in support of the theme of the unity of the people of the Nile valley, and obviously intended for home consumption, might conceivably have been believed by Nokrashi himself, who had never seen the Sudan, and they might have been swallowed by some of the representatives of the United Nations, who knew even less about the subject, had they not been convincingly refuted in detail by Sir A. Cadogan; but nothing could obscure the fact that Egypt's attitude towards the Sudanese was essentially imperialistic, while that of Great Britain was essentially liberal. As such, the Egyptian plea commanded no favour. Poland and Russia, while supporting the Egyptian view regarding British troops in Egypt, were non-committal about the Sudan. The representative of the former said that the principle of self-determination must be applied; M. Gromyko ventured no more than 'It is difficult for the Security Council to make a decision of any kind now. . . . We do not know what the wishes of the Sudanese people are nor what are their aspirations.' China could not see 'how the Council can be a party to any arrangement which would deprive the Sudanese people of this right of self-determination which is the foundation of the Charter of the United Nations'. Brazil, supported by the United States, France and Belgium, proposed that the two contestants should resume direct negotiations and (in effect) settle things peaceably between themselves. Nokrashi rejected this as an evasion of responsibility, and also an Australian amendment in favour of consultation with the Sudanese in so far as they were concerned. The Egyptian Government, he said, desired 'to work out the future of the Sudan in consultation, not with the British, not with the Sudanese while they are hampered by the British occupation, but with the Sudanese acting of their own free will. The United Kingdom has no place in the matter, and we shall not discuss it with them.'

On 10 September, 1947, none of the main resolutions having

* Chap. 11.

† He also spoke of the Sudan Government 'restricting even higher education to that designed to prepare for only menial tasks'—a bid, this, for Sudanese applause. The answer is provided by the facts given in Chap. 10.

gained the requisite majority, the Security Council adjourned, leaving the whole problem unsolved on its agenda. Nokrashi had gained nothing; but the United Nations had learned much, and the demand for independence in the Sudan acquired a new momentum.

In the Sudan plans for a Legislative Assembly and an Executive Council, each having a Sudanese majority, proceeded, and the recommendation in their favour made by the Sudan Government in July had been at once submitted to the Co-domini. In October the British Government accepted the proposals as being 'well calculated to achieve the proclaimed purposes of the Co-domini, namely the progressive development of self-government in the Sudan'. Egypt preferred to play for delay, and in November, while paying lip service to the principle of self-government, reaffirmed the position adopted at Lake Success and advanced a number of counter-proposals which were designed at one and the same time to give herself a measure of control and to outbid Great Britain for the favour of the Sudanese. The proposals under the second head were in some cases quite impractical, *e.g.*, the grant of full electoral rights for the entire population, or destructive in intent, *e.g.*, the curtailment of the powers reserved to the Governor-General. Failing acceptance of these modifications, Egypt declined to accept the proposals made.

In reply the British Government in January, 1948, proposed consultations to settle the points at issue; on 1 March the Egyptian Cabinet unanimously rejected the idea in the form put forward, but in May it accepted fresh suggestions, and an Anglo-Egyptian committee was set up under the leadership of the Egyptian Foreign Minister and the British Ambassador. This reached agreement, including a recommendation for a joint committee to supervise the progress of the Sudanese towards self-government, but the terms need not be recounted in detail, because the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Senate rejected the proposals made for constitutional reform on the ground that they ignored the sacred principle of the unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the crown of Egypt.

Matters could not be left so, and on 14 June the British Government announced that they felt unable to obstruct the promulgation of the Sudan ordinance creating a Legislative

Assembly and an Executive Council. They made it clear at the same time that this was altogether without prejudice to the question of the status of the Sudan. The ordinance, which had already been very fully debated by the Advisory Council of the Northern Sudan, was duly promulgated on 19 June, 1948, and incorporated the points which had been agreed by the Anglo-Egyptian Committee; * the Egyptian Government registered a formal protest on 8 July; polling day, 15 November, saw disturbances fomented by the Unity parties in the towns of the Sudan and a number of casualties; but finally, on 15 December, 1948, the first elected Sudanese Legislative Assembly began its work under the leadership of 'Abdulla Bey Khalil, the Secretary General of the *Umma* party and formerly an officer in the Sudan Defence Force. Most of the seats were held by the *Umma* and other Independence parties, for, in view of the Egyptian refusal to give approval, the Unity parties, with the exception of a few individuals, declined on principle to recognise the Legislative Assembly so long as it was formed under the existing régime in the Sudan.† The record of proceedings as compiled by the Sudan Broadcasting Service give evidence of a uniformly high level of debate being maintained and the success achieved 'to some extent stole the limelight from party factions'.‡

No developments of importance took place in the Sudan in the first half of 1949, but the general acceptance of the Sudan's claim to self-government at Lake Success, the terms of the Atlantic Charter in general, and the generous treatment accorded to Italy's lost colonies of Cyrenaica and Somaliland,§ which were considerably less advanced than the Sudan, stimulated Sudanese determination to become masters of their own fate without delay.

In August a political re-shuffle took place. The complete subservience of the Ashigga party to Egypt had lost it the support of the more moderate and wiser elements outside the Independence group, and a 'National Front' was formed, which favoured union with Egypt in a much looser and less permanent form, not unlike dominion status.‖ The new

* For details of the composition and powers of the Assembly and Council see p. 112.

† See Abbas, p. 139, and R.I.I.A., *Survey, 1939–46*, p. 359.

‡ A.R., 1949, p. 9.

§ See R.I.I.A., *Survey, 1949–50*, pp. 539 ff., and Abbas, p. 123.

‖ See Abbas, pp. 145, 146, and Duncan, p. 230.

grouping received the blessing of Sayed 'Ali el Mirghani, and at once attracted a number of adherents at the expense of the extremists. In the tribal and rural areas affiliation to one or other of the main groups was dictated less by any political consciousness than by allegiance to the rival religious leaders, whose policies in the secular field may be summed up respectively as 'dominion status with Egypt' and 'the Sudan for the Sudanese'.

In the early part of 1950, with the return of the *Wafd* to power in Egypt, there were few symptoms of improvement in Anglo-Egyptian relations regarding Middle East defence, and in so far as concerned the Sudan, the Foreign Minister, Salah el Din, was arguing in August that since the Sudan was more advanced than Libya, which was to become independent by the end of 1952, the Condominium and the British régime should likewise be ended within two years, 'after which the Sudan will have its own government in unity with Egypt'.

Matters were brought to a head by the King's speech from the throne on 16 November. In an obvious attempt to divert popular attention from the precarious internal situation and the corruption and abuses which were causing discontent, the intention was announced of abrogating the 1936 Treaty, and also the Condominium Agreements of 1899, and demanding 'complete evacuation and the unification of the Nile Valley and the Egyptian crown'. In respect to the former demand Mr. Bevin's reply (24 November) was in effect summed up in saying that he had no intention of agreeing to any measures which would leave the Middle East defenceless; in respect to the latter that our attitude remained unaltered, namely that the Sudanese should in due course freely decide their own future.

The words 'in due course' at this period appear to have envisaged anything from ten to twenty years; * but while the Anglo-Egyptian talks were still in progress the Independence Front at Khartoum had on 5 December tabled a motion in the Legislative Assembly,† expressing the 'opinion that the Sudan has now reached the stage at which self-government could be granted and request Your Excellency (the Governor-General) to approach the Condominium Powers with a re-

* *Cf.* R.I.I.A., *G.B. and E.*, p. 134.
† See Duncan, pp. 241, 242.

quest that a joint declaration of the grant of self-government be made before the end of the third session of the Assembly'. This motion was debated—against the protests of Egypt—but the more cautious country members * and the representatives of the south put forward an amendment which is important as marking the fact that the two parties—the Independence and Unity Fronts—which had hitherto held the political field were no longer to monopolise it, and that an influential body of opinion favoured discretion in place of precipitancy. The amendment substituted for 'has now reached the stage . . .' the words 'has made good progress towards the stage at which full self-government can be granted, and request Your Excellency to press on urgently with such measures which, while consistent with the maintenance of good government throughout the country, will ensure not only that such self-government shall be full and complete, but also that, in working towards that end, all sections of the community and all parties may co-operate in developing the institutions of self-government so as to hasten the day when the goal is attained'. The original motion was carried by a majority of only one vote.

A few days later the Assembly requested the Governor-General to appoint a Commission, of which at least half the members should be Sudanese, to re-examine the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Ordinance of 1948—which had never been intended as a final constitution—and propose amendments to increase the value of the joint body as an instrument of 'democratic government with a full measure of parliamentary control within the framework of the existing constitutional agreements'. To this there was no objection on the part of the Sudan Government provided the various parties could agree upon the terms of reference and composition of the Constitution Amendment Commission. But difficulties were encountered under both heads, for by now discrepant slogans and demands were multiplying in the towns, even more minority groups were being formed, and the whole tempo of politics had accelerated. The Ashigga declined all co-operation on principle, but the two main Fronts finally agreed upon the composition of the Commission, under the chairmanship of a British judge: there were to be eleven educated Sudanese and one tribal leader

* Later to figure as the 'Socialist Republicans'. See p. 211.

from the north and one southerner; and for the discussion of electoral rules four more countrymen were to be joined.

The terms of reference gave more trouble. Objection was taken, *e.g.*, to the words 'within the framework of the existing constitutional agreements' by the Unity Front; but these were finally disposed of, and at the end of March, 1951, in spite of renewed protests from Cairo, the Commission was appointed by the Governor-General 'to recommend to me the next steps to be taken in the constitutional advance to full self-government' and to review the electoral rules. The Commission was hard at work from April to November; * but developments in Egypt and sectarian rivalries at home continually complicated issues and distracted attention. The rivalries were endemic and unavoidable, but a word must be said of affairs in Egypt at this juncture.

Fresh proposals † were put forward in April by Mr. Morrison, who had succeeded Mr. Bevin, regarding Middle East defence, coupled with an offer to reopen the matter of the Sudan and a suggestion for an Anglo-Egyptian Commission to assist the Sudanese 'to attain full self-government as soon as practicable and thereafter to choose freely for themselves their form of government and the relationship with Egypt that will best suit their needs . . .'. In reply to this suggestion the Egyptian Foreign Minister merely reiterated the old preposterous contention of 'community of race, language, religion, culture, customs and interests', and demanded the withdrawal of British troops and officials from the Sudan within two years. The Ambassador's plea for a little flexibility and his warning of the probable effect of so dictatorial an attitude, as contrasted with our own, on Sudanese popular opinion and Egypto-Sudanese relations, fell upon deaf ears.

A deadlock followed both in relation to Middle East defence and the Sudan, and the position was further embittered by the support given by Great Britain at the Security Council to Jewish complaints against the embargo placed by Egypt upon the passage of goods to Israel through the Suez Canal.‡ The decision announced on 1 October to withdraw from Abadan, as we had withdrawn four years before from Pales-

* They were assisted by a valuable report obtained from Professor Vincent Harlow of Oxford on various technical points arising.

† See *Cmd.* 8419 for the full text of the notes exchanged.

‡ For the *Empire Roach* incident in July, 1951, see R.I.I.A., *G.B. and E.*, pp. 140, 141.

tine, gave tremendous confidence to the politicians of Egypt, who saw in it the promise of the imminent collapse of the erstwhile powerful British Empire; and to Nahas's Government in particular the moment seemed ripe for a spectacular stroke, for the country was seething with discontent at the uncontrolled cost of living and the blatant corruption and nepotism pervading public life. Accordingly, on 8 October, anticipating by a few days the delivery of fresh British proposals—which included *inter alia* the participation of Egypt as an equal in an international Middle East command, an international commission to supervise the constitutional development of the Sudan and an international guarantee of the Nile Waters Agreements *—Nahas declared to a wildly excited Parliament the abrogation of the treaty of 1936 and the Condominium Agreements. Three bills were presented: two of them dealt with the status of the Sudan and proclaimed Farouk as 'King of Egypt and the Sudan'; the third purported to create a Constitution for the Sudan. They were passed by the Egyptian Parliament on 15 October and communicated to His Majesty's Government in a note claiming that the effect was to 're-establish in the Sudan the state which existed before the British occupation', and demanding that 'any intervention by the English in the Sudan must cease immediately'.†

Great excitement naturally followed in the Sudan and wild speculation as to the effect of the abrogation of the Condominium Agreements. The Governor-General, Sir Robert Howe,‡ was in England on leave, but the Acting Governor-General at once proclaimed that His Majesty's Government did not recognise the validity of unilateral abrogation, declared the determination of the Sudan Government to continue its frequently reiterated policy towards the Sudanese, and appealed to all to refrain from any action likely to impede the work of the Constitution Amendment Commission. The British Government simultaneously gave their full assurance of support, and the Governor-General, who had at once returned to Khartoum (13 October), stated, 'My duty is to administer the Sudan in accordance with the Condominium

* These proposals were formally rejected on 15 October and need not therefore be quoted in full: see Duncan, pp. 235 ff., and Abbas, pp. 149–50.

† See R.I.I.A., *G.B. and E.*, p. 150, and *Cmd.* 8767, p. 6.

‡ He had succeeded Sir Hubert Huddleston in April, 1947.

Agreement of 1899 and I shall continue to do so. Any attempt from outside to interfere with the administration as laid down in that Agreement would be resisted and I shall take such steps as might be necessary to see that resistance is made effective.'

The Egyptian decree laying down a constitution for the Sudan had equally momentous effects.* It provided for a separate Sudanese Constitutent Assembly, electoral law, Council of Ministers and one or two Legislative Chambers, but then proceeded to give to the King of Egypt and the Sudan the right to dismiss Ministers and dissolve Parliament in the Sudan (as in Egypt), and to vest in him control of foreign affairs, the army, defence and currency. He was also given power to refuse approval of legislation passed by the Sudanese Parliament. This was fatal to any hopes that Egypt might have had of the support of Sudanese public opinion. Not only did it infuriate the Independence Front, but it demolished the case put forward by the National Front for 'dominion status with Egypt' and alienated all parties except the Ashigga minority.

On 25 October a motion was passed by the Legislative Assembly almost unanimously: †

> 'That this Assembly deplores the Egyptian Government's attempt to impose Egyptian sovereignty on the Sudan without consulting the Sudanese people and refuses to recognise the constitution promulgated by the Egyptian Government for the Sudan, as well as other actions recently taken by the Egyptian Government which infringe the natural rights of the Sudanese people; further that this Assembly records its warm appreciation of the repeated declarations made by the British Government that the future of the Sudan shall be decided by the Sudanese themselves and of the British Government's refusal to use the Sudan as a bargaining point in their efforts to reach a new defence agreement with the Egyptian Government. . . .'

On 15 November, 1951, Mr. Eden stated in the House of Commons that, in view of the uncertainty caused by Egypt's

* It had, incidentally, been followed by a purely propagandist suggestion, made by the Foreign Minister, that a plebiscite should be held in the Sudan. The only serious person who regarded this as 'realistic' was the Secretary General of the United Nations.

† See Duncan, pp. 250, 251.

unilateral action, His Majesty's Government re-affirmed that 'they regard the Governor-General and the present Sudan Government as fully responsible for continuing the administration of the Sudan'. They noted the progress being made by the Sudan in the direction of self-government and promised support for the steps being taken 'to bring the Sudanese rapidly to the stage of self-government as a prelude to self-determination and now await the recommendations of the Constitution Amendment Commission'.

He continued with these important words:

> 'His Majesty's Government are glad to know that a Constitution providing for self-government may be completed and in operation by the end of 1952. Having attained self-government, it will be for the Sudanese people to choose their own future status and relationship with the United Kingdom and with Egypt. His Majesty's Government consider that the attainment of self-government should immediately be followed by active preparations for the ultimate goal of self-determination. They will support the Governor-General in his efforts to ensure that the Sudanese people shall be able to exercise their choice in complete freedom and in the full consciousness of their responsibilities. . . . His Majesty's Government meanwhile guarantee to ensure the defence and security of the Sudan during the intervening period.'

The abrogation of the treaties had not been unexpected in the Sudan, and was indeed greeted with general satisfaction by all parties as calculated to further their respective aims, and they were correspondingly disapppointed by the denials of its validity. The country members could not understand why the opportunity was not seized to remove the Egyptian flag, and all alike suspected that Great Britain had every intention of remaining indefinitely. On the other hand, the dictation of a constitution by Egypt to the Sudan without any consultation * was regarded as an insult. The members of the Constitution Amendment Commission were not only excited; they were mystified—as were others—as to what was now the juridical position of the Sudan and in whom was

* The President of the Ashigga, Isma'il el Azhari, was apparently the only Sudanese regarded as worthy of consultation by the Egyptian Foreign Minister. See Duncan, p. 248.

sovereignty vested. They decided to continue their work, but the eventual outcome was a violent dissension. This resulted on 21 November, 1951, in the resignation of six members on the question of sovereignty during the transitional period of 'home rule' prior to self-determination and the desirability of having a supervisory United Nations Commission *—which were entirely outside their terms of reference—before they had reached the point of dealing with the subject of the electoral law.

The Governor-General had no option but to dissolve the Commission on 26 November. But it had already done valuable work in respect to the articles of the draft constitution, as to which all thirteen members were agreed,† and on 10 December the report of the chairman of the Commission was submitted to the Governor-General and presented by him to the Legislative Assembly for discussion in January, 1952. It was duly debated by that body in the form of a Draft Self-Government Statute amending the 1948 Ordinance and entitled 'an order to provide for full self-government for the Sudan', and was approved in April, 1952,‡ and submitted to the Co-domini in May. Its subsequent fate and the form which it finally assumed will be dealt with in the following chapter, but first something must be said of other developments in the Sudan and in Egypt which materially affected the course of events.

In the Sudan, one result of the excitement caused by the abrogation controversy had been the grouping together of a multitude of insignificant parties with high-sounding titles designed to give the United Nations and the world in general a mistaken idea of their importance. They received no support from the main parties, who preferred to rely upon the Commission as a means for the realisation of their aims. On the other hand, the country members in the Assembly, northerners and southerners, knowing that the country as a

* A telegraphic appeal by individual members of the Commission to the United Nations for the setting up of an International Commission had brought no result.

† A sub-committee had been appointed on 29 October to review such recommendations for the amendment of the constitution as had been agreed upon before Egypt's abrogation of the Condominium Agreements.

‡ The text will be found in *Appendices* 2 and 3 of *Egypt No. 2 (1953)*. *Cmd.* 8767. This was the last important act of the Legislative Assembly, whose term of office, though twice extended beyond its normal three years, expired in October. See p. 113.

whole was as wearied, as they were, of the quarrellings of the professional politicians, had formed what became an influential group—they disclaimed the title of 'party'—calling itself Socialist Republican,* and attracted the allegiance of many moderates from all parties. Its principles were largely the fruit of the Sudan Government's policy of 'indirect rule' as practised in the pre-political era, or 'local government' as it became later,† and its appeal to the country was based on anti-sectarianism. It entirely disagreed with suggestions for an international commission, over which no control could be exercised and which would cause nothing but confusion, and preferred—the Condominium having, in its view, come to an end—to see the Governor-General continue as head of the State until the stage of self-determination was reached. It urged, in fine, 'co-operation and partnership with the existing Sudan Government to develop, in effect, a fully self-governing constitution until such time as the Sudan is in a position to declare its own future; and recognising that the Sudan still needs foreign help, to make the best possible use of those foreigners who are prepared to serve a Sudan Government that is rapidly becoming truly a Sudanese Government working entirely for the benefit of the Sudan and the Sudanese'.

Some mention should also be made of another factor that was by now beginning to add its disruptive force to political rivalries.‡ Strikes, which had been taking place since 1947 among railway workers and other trade unionists, were aimed originally at little more than higher wages. In 1950 the Railway Workers' Association and other trade unions § formed themselves into a Sudan Trade Unions Federation, which, under Communist leadership, adopted a minatory attitude towards the administration during the tension periods of 1950 and 1951. Ignoring the principle that industrial obligations must take priority over political affiliations, this body took upon itself to publish in December, 1951, a demand for

* 'Republican' suggesting opposition to any claim for kingship; 'Socialist' suggesting opposition to wealthy capitalists. For the aims of the group see *The Times* of 17 November, 1951, Mayall in R.I.I.A., *International Affairs*, July, 1952, and Duncan, pp. 262 ff.

† See Chap. 9. ‡ See Duncan, pp. 252–61.

§ The *Sudan Almanac* for 1952 lists seventy-eight registered trade unions as at 31 March, 1951. There are now (1953) eighty-eight, of which the largest is the Sudan Railway Workers' Union with a membership of about 1900.

the 'immediate evacuation of economic, political, administrative and military foreign administrators from the Sudan' and to advocate, as a means to this end, 'non-co-operation in any form with imperialism, since co-operation consolidates its existence'. It is easy to over-estimate the weight to be attached to such effusions, but Mr. Abbas is perhaps guilty of meiosis when he writes: 'The day when the labour movement will begin to play an important part in the political affairs of the country is not likely to be long delayed.'*

In Egypt more serious trouble was brewing. Simultaneously with the abrogation of the Anglo-Egyptian treaties in October, 1951, the *Wafd* had stirred up xenophobic excitement in Egypt and done all they could to make the British position in the Canal Zone untenable. To complete the picture of dementia run wild, organised squads of incendiaries on 26 January, 1952, burned British and other properties in Cairo, murdering ten British subjects and doing some £40,000,000 worth of damage. The army alone stood studiously aloof.

Terrified by the chaos, to which his own vanity and arrogance had so largely contributed, Farouk summarily dismissed Nahas and called, first upon 'Ali Maher, to restore order and equilibrium, and when he resigned in March, upon the more sedate and respected Hilali Pasha. Fresh Anglo-Egyptian talks followed, but came to nothing because of Hilali's unwillingness to accept, in respect of the Sudan, any formula which was suggested to cover the moot point of Egyptian sovereignty.†

* Abbas, p. 147. † *Cmd.* 8767, p. 7.

Chapter 16

Politics. Stage III: January, 1952, to February, 1953

THE main provisions of the Self-Government Statute as passed with certain amendments in April, 1952, may be outlined as follows: *

Fundamental rights were laid down establishing freedom and equality of all persons before the law; freedom of religious opinion and association; the rule of law, and the independence of the judiciary.

The Governor-General would hold supreme military command and also be the constitutional head of the State, acting on the advice of the Prime Minister (save as expressly provided). He would also retain control of the judicial department and a Public Service Commission for which provision was made. During the transitional (home rule) period prior to the Sudanese exercising the right of self-determination he would be exclusively responsible for external affairs, would have special responsibilities for the public services and the southern provinces, and retain emergency powers to take over control of government if satisfied that it could not be carried on under the constitution because of political deadlock, boycott or non-co-operation, or if financial collapse or the breakdown of law and order was imminent. He could no longer, however, override decisions of Parliament on any other grounds.

The Prime Minister would be elected by the House of Representatives and appointed by the Governor-General. Ten to fifteen Sudanese Ministers would be appointed on his advice, and of them not less than two must be representatives of southern constituencies. The Prime Minister and his fellow Ministers would together constitute a Council of Ministers, responsible to Parliament for all the executive and administrative functions of internal government.

* For the full text see *Cmd.* 8767, *App.* 3. The Statute was altered in many important respects by the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 12 February, 1953.

Parliament would consist of two Houses: a Senate and a House of Representatives. These, with the Governor-General, would together constitute the Legislature. The Senate would have fifty members, twenty of whom would be nominated by the Governor-General * and thirty elected by electoral colleges in the provincial constituencies. The House of Representatives would have ninety-two members, of whom thirty-five (representing the more politically advanced elements) would be elected directly by secret ballot, and fifty-seven (representing the more backward areas) would be elected indirectly through local electoral colleges, in both cases on a basis of adult male suffrage.† In addition there would be a Graduates' Constituency having three members.

The most important amendment adopted by the Assembly provided that the Sudanese should freely decide for themselves the time and method of the exercise of their right to self-determination.

Meanwhile events in Egypt were moving to a climax. An *Umma* delegation had visited Egypt in June, 1952, at Hilali's invitation, but on 28 June the Prime Minister was dismissed by the King and a series of re-shuffles took place, during which the delegation revisited a series of successors without much result. But by now general discontent was spreading rapidly over Egypt, and particularly so among the army officers, who justifiably attributed the blame for most of their grievances to the corruption of wealthy pashas and politicians surrounding and abetting a profligate monarch and to the complaisance and connivance of the *Wafd*. A leader emerged in the person of General Mohammed Negib, who commanded the respect of the army and was nominated by them to take charge of the situation. On the night of 22 July the army occupied Cairo, and on the 26th, using 'Ali Maher as their agent in the position of Prime Minister, forced Farouk to abdicate and leave the country. His infant son was proclaimed 'King of Egypt and the Sudan' with a provisional Council of Regency.‡ Negib had announced that the action

* Under the Agreement of 12 February, 1953, the prior approval of the Governor-General's Commission is required. *Cmd.* 8767, p. 65 (*Art.* 12(3)).

† See later, p. 221, for the proportional alterations made in these numbers under the agreement of 12 February, 1953.

‡ When on 18 June, 1953, the monarchy was abolished and a republic proclaimed, no mention was made of the Sudan (*The Times*, 27 June, 1953).

of the army had nothing to do with politics and had intended to leave government on a constitutional basis—probably on the lines followed by Brigadier Sheshekli in Syria—but on 7 September the façade of civil government had perforce to be discarded and Negib himself assumed the premiership at the head of a 'high committee of the revolution'. Political leaders, including Nahas, had meanwhile lost no time in welcoming Negib as the saviour of his country.

Under the terms of the 1948 Ordinance the Self-Government Statute of the Sudan could be brought into force by the Governor-General provided that both governments did not object within six months of the date of its submission, and in September, 1952, Her Majesty's Government, who had already given their general blessing to the Statute, informed Negib of their intention to approve it, expressing the hope of a joint approach to the matter, and made a number of suggestions—in particular for an international commission to supervise the Sudanese elections.

Now, Negib himself was partly Sudanese by birth on his mother's side and had been educated for two years at the Gordon College. This gave him an understanding of the Sudanese viewpoint far different from the abysmal ignorance and irresponsible insouciance which had characterised previous Ministers. Moreover, various Sudanese parties had been busily negotiating separately with his Government and reaching agreements with it—though these were not always in identical or even reconcilable terms. In consequence of his realisation of the way in which matters had been mishandled and of the imminence of grave danger to the interests of his country, his response to the British approach was encouraging.

In October Mr. Eden informed the House of Commons that formal consent had been accorded by his Government to the Governor-General's giving effect to the draft Statute. On 2 November the Egyptian Government made its formal reply to the British advances, setting out its own proposals.* The salient feature of this reply, repeated in the agreements made with the Independence Front (both *Umma* and Socialist Republicans) and marking a completely new and very welcome turn in the everlasting controversy, was acceptance on the part of Egypt of the proposition that a period of self-government

* For the text see *App.* 5 of *Cmd.* 8767.

should begin immediately in the Sudan; that it should be followed by self-determination; that in the meanwhile sovereignty should be reserved for the Sudanese, and that during the interim period of home-rule self-government should be on the basis of the draft Statute submitted by the Governor-General.

At the same time a number of radical amendments to the draft were proposed, some of which had been accepted by the Sudanese parties and some had not. Of these the one presenting the most thorny points was that relating to the Governor-General's special responsibilities for safeguarding the interests of the backward southern Sudan. The Egyptian Government, still nervous about its water supplies, desired to remove this provision altogether—a course consistent with the agreement it had made with the *Umma*, but inconsistent with that made with the Socialist Republicans who were acting as backers for the southerners.

Egypt also proposed, not only an international commission to supervise the elections to be held, but also a second international commission whose approval would be required for decisions taken by the Governor-General under his discretionary powers, and in addition a 'Sudanisation Committee' to speed up the replacement of foreign officials by Sudanese 'in order to provide a free and neutral atmosphere for Sudanisation'. The transitional period of home rule was not to exceed three years, subject to the completion of Sudanisation.

These proposals, which were attractive to the more nationalistic spirits among the Sudanese, were of course dictated by the desire of the Egyptians and their supporters to eliminate the British element from the Sudan as quickly as possible, and, in the meanwhile, to reduce the position of the Governor-General to one of paralysis.

The British Government, swallowing the obvious implication that the Governor-General and his officials could not be trusted to carry out their promises honestly without supervision by a series of commissions, replied with a suggestion that the less controversial matter of the elections should be dealt with first, and that thereafter, if agreement had not been reached on the other points, the Sudan Parliament should be left to decide them. Negib would not agree to this and wished all points to be settled together; and it was also very clear that the Sudanese themselves were becoming impatient for

an end to all the uncertainties and eager to take the fullest advantage of the new mood in Egypt before it was changed by a further revolution and change of personalities.

The British Government, in consequence, acquiesced in the course proposed and embarked upon a fresh series of negotiations on the issues raised. These were further complicated when on 10 January, 1953, the four main political parties of the northern Sudan—the *Umma* (Independence), the National Unionists (pro-Egyptian), the Socialist Republicans and the *Watan* (National Party, pro-independence on a republican basis)—in their eagerness at any cost to get Egypt's formal acknowledgment of their right of self-determination—signed a mutual agreement in the presence of an Egyptian emissary, Major Salah Salim,* at Khartoum, which conceded the most important of the Egyptian demands. These included the replacement in the Statute of the Governor-General's special powers to safeguard the southerners by a formula giving him a wide and vague right to refer to the Co-Domini any legislation which could be considered unfair to anyone; the formation of a Governor-General's Commission; a form of Sudanisation involving the removal of certain categories of British officials before the exercise of self-determination; the principle of direct elections wherever possible; and the withdrawal of British and Egyptian troops before the elections. However, the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations continued without a break, and on 12 January the British Ambassador presented a draft agreement incorporating the points on which agreement had been reached,† and after further discussions, amendments and adjustments, a final agreement was signed on 12 February, 1953.‡ The news of the signature was received with vast enthusiasm in Khartoum and a meeting was held which was attended, not only by the supporters of the four chief parties and by leading officials, but also—wonderful to relate—by both the son of the Mahdi and the son of Sayed 'Ali el Mirghani.§

* For the text see *App.* 6 of *Cmd.* 8767. Salim also paid a rapid visit to the Upper Nile to ingratiate himself with some of the southerners. Photographs of him dancing in his underwear appeared in the British press on 13 January and his methods have been aptly described as 'strip-tease diplomacy' (*Daily Mail*, 13 February, 1953). He now holds the post of Minister of National Guidance.

† For the text see *App.* 7 of *Cmd.* 8767.

‡ For the text see *App.* 8 of *Cmd.* 8767. It is reprinted as an Appendix to this book.

§ See *Times*, 21 February, 1953.

Space does not allow of the reproduction *verbatim* of all the annexes giving the composition and terms of reference of the various Commissions to be set up and the amendments made to the Self-Government Statute, but the gist of the Agreement may be summed up as follows, and it will be noted that in effect, though not specifically, it nullifies the unilateral abrogation in 1951 by Nahas of the Condominium Agreements of 1899, for Great Britain and Egypt are still recognised as Co-domini and the Governor-General remains in temporary being as their representative:

The right of the Sudanese is established to self-determination to be exercised after a transitional period of self-government, during which sovereignty is reserved for the Sudanese. This period must not exceed three years and does not begin until 'the appointed day', namely that on which the Governor-General certifies that, following the elections,* the Sudan Parliament has been constituted. During the course of the transitional (home-rule) period, while the Condominium is being wound up, the Governor-General retains the high-sounding titles of Commander-in-Chief and Supreme Constitutional Authority, and is directly responsible to the Co-domini in respect to external affairs, but in respect to internal affairs he will have practically no executive power, except for a special responsibility for the Public Service and the duty of safeguarding their contractual rights and interests and ensuring fair and equitable treatment for them. At almost every turn the exercise of such powers as the Self-Government Statute has left to him—and incidentally those of the Prime Minister †—is subject to severe restriction (called 'aid') by a series of international bodies, which are set up.

These are, first, a Governor-General's Commission, consisting of a Pakistani member as Chairman, one British, one Egyptian, and two Sudanese, proposed by the British and Egyptian Governments in agreement, and subsequently approved by the Sudanese Parliament, which is entitled to nominate alternative candidates. The decisions of the Commission are by majority vote. The Governor-General may, in case of a breakdown of the machinery of government, de-

* *i.e.*, in all probability towards the end of 1953.

† On this point see an article in *The Times* of 16 May, 1952, and a letter in the same on 28 November.

clare a constitutional emergency: if the breakdown is due to a political deadlock, the prior approval of his Commission is required; if it is due to financial causes or the collapse of law and order, he is free to act without its consent, but would be required to end the emergency within thirty days if the Commission objected and its objection was upheld by either of the Co-domini.

Second, an Electoral Commission is set up to supervise the preparation and conduct of the elections. This consists of an Indian member as chairman, one British, one Egyptian, one United States American, and three Sudanese appointed by the Governor-General with the approval of his Commission.

Third, there is to be a Sudanisation Committee, consisting of one British, one Egyptian and three Sudanese members selected by the Governor-General with the prior approval of his Commission from a list of five submitted to him by the Prime Minister. Its duties will be referred to later.

A fourth international commission will, or may, appear at a later stage. At the end of the transitional period the Sudanese Parliament will pass a formal resolution expressing the desire that arrangements for self-determination be put in motion, and the Governor-General will so inform the Co-domini. At this stage British and Egyptian military forces withdraw from the Sudan.* A draft law will then be drawn up by the Sudan Government for the election of the Constituent Assembly, which is to 'decide the future of the Sudan as one integral whole' and frame a constitution compatible with its decision. This law will be submitted to the Parliament for approval, but the agreement of the Governor-General's Commission will be required to his consenting to it. The detailed preparations for the process of self-determination, including arrangements designed to secure a 'free and neutral atmosphere', will be subject to international supervision, and the Co-domini bind themselves to accept the recommendations of 'any international body which may be set up to this end'.

The Co-domini also engage to respect the decision of the Constituent Assembly regarding the future status of the country, but its decision is restricted to two alternatives, namely 'choosing to link the Sudan with Egypt in any form', or 'choosing complete independence'.

* One British and one Egyptian battalion and a squadron of the R.A.F. at present.

The White Paper * which embodies all the relevant documents concludes by saying:

> 'The Agreement now signed sets the scene for the final stages of Her Majesty's Government's task in the Sudan. . . . It will be clear that a number of threads have run unbroken through British policy: the government of the Sudan in the interests of the Sudanese; the preparation of the Sudanese to take over responsibility for the government of their country and to decide their own future status; and agreement with the Egyptian Co-dominus on the manner of fulfilling this policy . . .'

These are fair words, not untouched by complacency; but there remains room for qualms regarding the future, both during the short interim period of home rule and after the Sudanese have exercised their right of determining their ultimate status.

The Agreement of 12 February, 1953, has one great merit in the eyes of the Sudanese which outweighs all defects: it registers irrevocably the acceptance by Egypt of the principle that the Condominium over the Sudan is to end and the Sudanese are to be free to choose their own road into the future. The British have worked in all consistency and honesty for the same consummation, and however open to criticism may be the actual order of march selected for the first stage of the journey, the goodwill of the Sudanese would have been lost had we pushed criticism too far and appeared in the rôle, not of coadjutors, but of obstructionists.

That the terms accepted for the Government of the Sudan during the transitional period when the Governor-General is little more than a figurehead are open to criticism is hardly to be questioned, but, on the other hand, the force of this is somewhat reduced by the fact that the provisions are strictly temporary in intention and, it is to be hoped, in effect. If they lead to a complete breakdown in the administration, the results will, of course, be disastrous, and the present lack of any basic community of intention, either between the Co-domini or the Sudanese political parties, must give rise to anxiety, though they do not extinguish hope.

Apart from the serious overall weakening of the Governor-General's powers, there are a number of obvious danger

* *Cmd.* 8767.

points, each centred upon separate but interrelated provisions of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement, and the chief of these may be stated in an ascending scale of importance.

The first is that of the method of electing members of the Parliament. The Self-Government Statute of April, 1952, wisely provided for elections to be direct in the towns and more advanced constituencies, and indirect in the more backward areas. Careful lists were drawn up in agreement under each head, and it was left to the Governor-General to make rules for the conduct of the elections. The pressure of the politicians has, however, been continuous in favour of delay * and the extension of direct elections to the utmost limit, the motive being to increase their own chance of attracting the sympathy of the individual voter and to lessen the influence and authority of the tribal chiefs. Under Annex II of the Agreement the Electoral Commission replaces the Governor-General in the matter of electoral rules and can amend the division of constituencies as between direct and indirect, and they are doing so in a manner calculated greatly to increase the former type.†

How the individuals will in fact cast their votes remains to be seen. If they tend to support their own tribal representatives, no harm will have been done; if they tend to discard them in favour of some other nominee of the politicians, the result will be disruptive of order and of the whole system of indirect rule and local government which has been developed with so much care and success. One thing is sure: that the tribal leaders will strongly resist the demand of the politicians that they should resign their tribal appointments before they can stand as candidates for Parliament in their own tribal areas; and it appears that so far the attempt has failed.‡

* The Electoral Commission was appointed in April, 1953, but on 6 May announced postponement of the elections until late October, when the rains would be over.

† The thirty-five direct and fifty-seven indirect constituencies of the Statute as amended (see p. 214 above) remained in the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of February, 1953, but the lists were left open for revision by the Electoral Commission. As a result of its examinations there will now be sixty-eight direct and only twenty-four indirect (see *The Times*, 4 June), and the number of members in the Graduates' constituency has been raised from three to five. A totally unexpected factor which appears to have contributed to this preference for the direct method is that in the southern districts translation has led to a tendency to equate 'direct' with 'honest', and 'indirect' with 'dishonest'.

‡ See *The Times*, 24 June, 1953.

The second danger point is the southern Sudan. This is still to be represented in the Government by at least two Ministers and in Parliament by a quarter of the members; but the southerners were not parties to the Agreement, and the Governor-General's special responsibility for them has been replaced by a general responsibility 'to ensure fair and equitable treatment to all the inhabitants of the Sudan'. Here the motive was to remove any possible suggestion of a distinction between south and north which might at some future date lead to a partition, and to underline the fundamental principle enshrined in Article 5 of the Agreement—that of maintaining the unity of the Sudan as a single territory. As we have seen in an earlier chapter,* the British were quite unwarrantably suspected of fostering a contrary aim in their own interests. The southern representatives, however, for quite different reasons feel strongly the need for safeguards against the domination of their interests by those of the sophisticated Mohammedan northerners for whom they have no liking, and fear discrimination against Christian converts.

In many respects their attitude is closely similar to that of the northern Nigerians, who have taken the line that 'the northern region is not ready to commit itself to a fixed date for self-government in 1956', holding that Her Majesty's Government would 'fail in her duty if Nigeria were given its independence while the north was incapable of taking its full share in educational, economic and administrative activities'.† The southerners only consented in 1947 to the principle of a united Sudan and participation in the Legislative Assembly in the expectation of material benefits to be received, and in the belief that independence would not come for several years and that they would thus be given time, with the aid of their British District Commissioners, to fortify their own position. Now, without having been consulted, they find themselves in a less stable position, and realising the implications of the Sudanisation of the administration, feel that they have been rushed and fooled. It is true that they retain a reasonable representation,‡ but their fears and dis-

* Chap. 9, pp. 116 *et seq.* † See *The Times*, 25 May, 1953.

‡ It is quite uncertain how their votes will be cast in the Parliament to be. There is at present no southern political party, and they may well, if united, hold the balance between the main groups of northerners, who are angling assiduously for their support.

likes have not diminished, and it is improbable that they will show a complacent disposition to accept majority decisions to which they object, and still more improbable that their millions of untutored and still warlike followers will, in any case, quietly submit to governmental measures which they resent or fail to understand. The result may be a separatist movement of entirely indigenous growth, and support for it, whether directed to independence or to some form of federalism on the Nigerian model, would certainly not be confined to constitutional measures. Violent strife is a possibility, disturbances a probability, and their gravity will be the greater in proportion as Sudanisation has been enforced. One factor alone makes for unification with the north, namely the dependence of the south upon the north for the funds needed for development, and it remains uncertain whether this can always be counted upon, if the atmosphere becomes overheated, to outweigh all other motives.

The Governor-General's obligation (*Art.* 100 of the Statute as amended) to ensure equitable treatment for all is as clearly unenforceable in this case as in any other. Its basic fault lies less in the omission of specific reference to the southern provinces than in the removal from the Governor-General of sufficient power to carry out his responsibilities, in whatever terms they are couched. Moreover, it will encourage any inhabitants of the Sudan, in north or south, who may think they have a grievance—and such will not be few in number—to appeal to the Head of the State, and there will not be lacking mischief-makers to make him the public scapegoat when immediate redress is not forthcoming.

This brings us to the third and most serious danger of all—that of the Sudanisation of the services—and it is not too much to say that if it is not handled wisely all that has been built may founder into ruin.

The Sudanisation Commission does not come into being until after the Parliament and Cabinet have been formed. Its composition—one British, one Egyptian and three Sudanese—has already been mentioned. Its duties are—

> 'to complete the Sudanisation of the Administration, the Police, the Sudan Defence Force, and any other Government post that may affect the freedom of the Sudanese at the time of Self-Determination. The

Committee shall review the various Government posts with a view to cancelling any unnecessary or redundant post held by Egyptian or British officials. . . .

'The Committee shall take its decisions by majority vote. The Committee's decisions shall be submitted to the Sudanese Council of Ministers. If the Governor-General does not agree with any such decision or with the views of the Council of Ministers, he may with the approval of his Commission withhold his assent, and, in the event of disagreement between the Governor-General and the latter, the matter shall be referred to the two Governments. The Commission's decisions shall stand unless the two Governments agree to the contrary. The Sudanisation Committee shall complete its duties within a period not exceeding three years. It shall render periodical reports to the Governor-General, who shall consider them in conjunction with his Commission. These reports with any comment thereon shall be transmitted to the two Governments for such joint action as they may consider appropriate. The two Governments shall give every possible assistance for the completion of the Committee's task . . .' *

The question arises: what exactly does 'Sudanisation' mean? The terms of reference quoted admit of some doubt. One interpretation, which will certainly be insisted upon by the Egyptians and many of the Sudanese politicians, is that the total evacuation of all British personnel from the Administration, the Police and the Sudan Defence Force, and to a limited extent from other departments, must take place within three years, failing which the Sudanese cannot have their independence. British evacuation was in fact the price which Egypt demanded for her acceptance of the principle of self-government and self-determination for the Sudanese. On the other hand, it may be contended that the 'completion' of Sudanisation is qualified by the reference to cancelling 'any unnecessary or redundant post held by Egyptian or British officials', and, whether it is or not, it may safely be assumed that the Sudanese will demand the exercise of their independence within three years or less, whoever may try to stop them. Who will wish to do so? Not we, and not the United

* Annex III of the Agreement (*Cmd.* 8767, p. 64).

Nations Organisation; nor are the means by which Egypt could do so apparent. The Sudanisation Committee is to report, not to the Governor-General nor to the Co-domini, but to the Sudanese Council of Ministers, both Co-domini appearing to retain at least some right to a say in the matter during the transitional period. In effect, the final decision regarding the retention of foreign officials in every branch of the service rests with the Sudanese themselves, and it would seem that if they wish to retain the services of a number of the British staff they are free to do so, subject to the approval of an International Commission, which has yet to be appointed. There are grounds for hope that, whatever party is successful in the elections, and whatever propaganda or pressure may come from Egypt or from youthful extremists, responsible Sudanese will not be mad enough completely to disregard the principle of gradualness which they accepted in 1948 * and precipitate a complete breakdown of the administration and economy of their country.†

As regards the Sudan Defence Force and the Police, the dangers of Sudanisation are less acute than in the case of the Administration. The numbers involved are fewer; ‡ the training and experience of the potential Sudanese replacements are greater. If a British Military Mission were accepted, as it was in Egypt, there is no reason to suppose that there would be a serious loss of discipline or efficiency. But the position in respect to the Administration is very different, and to understand the extent of this risk it will be necessary to examine the number of British officials involved, the duties they are carrying out, and the prospects of finding Sudanese to replace them.

First, however, let us look at the forecast of the process of Sudanisation as envisaged by the Anglo-Sudanese Committee of 1948 in the case of first division posts to be held by Sudanese in certain of the more important departments of

* See p. 111. At that time, according to the A.R. for 1947 (pp. 12, 13), the percentage of classified staff in the civil service as a whole was: British 10·99; Egyptians 3·70; Sudanese 84·97; others 0·34. See Abbas, p. 106.

† *Cf.* letter in *The Times* of 28 November, 1952, from Prof. D. K. Sen of the University College, Khartoum.

‡ There are about thirty British commissioned officers in the S.D.F. (the present strength of which is about 5,000 all told). The Police Force has a total establishment of 120 officers, all but six of whom are Sudanese, and about 6,500 men.

government, including the Administration: it is illustrated by the following table of certain selected percentages:

	1948	1952	1962
Administrative officers	14·3	21·4	54·5
Agriculturalists	8·5	22·0	55·9
Civil engineers	25·5	37·9	61·0
Doctors	39·0	62·9	66·1
Educationists	17·4	24·8	55·4
Judges and law officers	44·4	59·4	82·4
Scientific officers	4·6	9·5	33·3

The pace was to be determined by the rate at which Sudanese with reasonably sufficient qualifications and experience could be made available. The increase of wealth in the following years, involving great schemes of development, led to large increases in the number of both expatriate officials and Sudanese employed in the higher posts, and the percentages to date have been much as anticipated; but with the end of the cotton boom the number of expatriates, which included many engaged on short contracts, will automatically decrease and the Sudanese percentage will rise. That is to say that within the three years of the transitional period—if it lasts so long—there will not be enough adequately trained men to fill the most responsible posts in the Government service, even though a slight lowering of standard is accepted as inevitable; and who is to fill them? If a breakdown is to be avoided it is essential for the Sudanese to retain those whom they cannot for the present replace.*

But it is to be remembered that the decision depends not only on the Sudanisation Committee and the Sudanese Council of Ministers, but also on the willingness of the expatriates to remain. This factor was stressed in Chapter 11 in speaking of the many British field-inspectors, engineers and others engaged in the Gezira project and the dangers of los-

* In the Gold Coast this point has been appreciated. On 8 July the Prime Minister, Dr. Nkrumah, announced his intentions in words which apply equally to the case of the Sudan: 'In the Gold Coast political advance has outstripped the Africanisation of the public service and we find ourselves, on the threshold of independence, having to rely far more on the services of overseas officers than was the case in India, Pakistan, or Ceylon. . . . We have more than laid the foundations of a future African Civil Service, but the fact must be faced that for some years we shall have to continue to rely on the services of overseas officers. . . . While appreciating the need for accelerated Africanisation, the Government does not propose that this should be achieved at the expense of efficiency' (*The Times*, 9 July, 1953).

ing their services; and it must be repeated with emphasis that the reactions of these men, and also of the provincial administrators, depend not so much on the financial terms offered to them as on the prospects of their being satisfied with the conditions prevailing in the era of Sudanese self-government and confident that they can carry out their duties impartially, efficiently, in security, and without continual frustration and political interference. In the absence of such satisfaction and confidence, the attachment to the country and its people felt by so many of those who have served there will be outweighed by dissatisfaction and uncertainty, and a general exodus will be the result.* The proud fellowship of the British community will disintegrate and few will desire to survive in isolation.

The application of Sudanisation to the Political Service has, by general agreement, been slower than in the departments, because the principle was for long accepted—and still finds favour with the country members—that no man having the wide powers of a Governor or a District Commissioner could be impartial in his own country. After the war, with the growth of political consciousness and nationalism, the policy was to some extent modified, but not sufficiently to afford any hope that the administration of the provinces can be conducted successfully unless the British element is retained, at least for the time needed either to train Sudanese to take their place, or unless there is a reversion to the system of indirect rule through the strengthening of the organs of local government. The difficulties surrounding the former alternative have been mentioned; the latter is anathema to those politicians who aim at increasing their own power at the expense of that of the tribal chiefs.

The numerical strength of the British Political Service † is 144, of whom 109 are serving in the provinces (nine Governors, ten Deputy Governors, forty-eight District Commissioners and forty-two Assistant District Commissioners), twenty at headquarters, and sixteen in the departments. On the Sudanese side there are in the Political Service 119

* Steps have already been taken by the Sudan Government, without prejudice to the work of the Sudanisation Committee, and in fairness to both parties, provisionally to fix a date (1 April, 1955) after which expatriates' contracts may be terminated on a three months' notice (*The Times*, 21 May, 1953).

† Figures are as in December, 1952.

officials, senior and junior. If the British element is all to be replaced in three years, that involves the promotion of all the 119, plus twenty-five still to be recruited, to highly responsible senior posts, and the recruitment of a further 119 to fill their places. The output of the School of Administration, which gives a two-year course of training, is about twelve per annum. If the deficit is to be made up by taking senior Sudanese from other departments—schoolmasters, agriculturalists, etc.—the effect upon the standard of efficiency, both in the provinces and in the departments so depleted, can be imagined.

Of the British staff itself and the work which it is still doing it is fitting at this point to quote the words spoken by the Foreign Secretary on the conclusion of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement: *

> 'I cannot let this occasion pass without expressing the admiration which I, personally, feel . . . for the Sudan Civil Service. Over the past fifty years, the members of the Sudan Civil Service have built for themselves a reputation for devotion to duty which has few equals in the world. . . . Whether or not the transfer of power in the Sudan proceeds in an orderly and smooth manner depends, to a very large extent, on their courage and patience. I feel sure that we can count upon them to see this transfer completed in conformity with their traditions. Her Majesty's Government will certainly not forget what they have done, and will keep their interests in mind.'

By way of final comment upon the Agreement of 12 February, 1953, it must be added that one major question remains likely to lead to further acrimonious dispute: whether the Sudanese Parliament, when it comes into being after the elections, will be able to amend its terms. The Egyptians declined to include in the Agreement a protocol declaring that the Sudanese Parliament should be free to discuss the main provisions of the Agreement; but Mr. Eden made it clear on the day of signature that the British Government would consider any views upon the Agreement expressed by the Sudanese Parliament, which 'is, of course, able under Article 101 of the Statute to discuss any of the contents of the Statute and

* 12 February, 1953. See *App.* 9 to *Cmd.* 8767, p. 69.

to propose any constitutional amendments'.* So, too, in the House of Lords,† in answer to a question by Lord Simon as to whether the Sudanese Parliament had the power to amend the Self-Government Statute, Lord Reading replied for the Foreign Office that provision for its amendment was contained in Article 101 of the Statute, which stated that the Governor-General could, if so requested by a joint resolution carried by a three-quarters majority at a joint sitting of both Houses, by order revoke, modify or extend all or any of the provisions of the Statute. Under Article 6 of the Agreement,‡ he pointed out, the Governor-General remains directly responsible to the two contracting Governments as regards 'any change requested by the Sudanese Parliament under Article 101 (1) of the Statute for Self-Government as regards any part of that Statute'.

Whether any 'joint resolution carried by a three-quarters majority' can be passed or not, it is difficult to envisage a self-governing Sudan according much sacro-sanctity to any condition which it may wish to modify.

* See *Cmd.* 8767, p. 11. † See *The Times*, 26 February, 1953.
‡ *q.v.* in the Appendix, p. 244.

Chapter 17

Egypt's Rôle

IT is clear that during the transitional period of home rule the prospects of a peaceful passage for the Sudan under the auspices of so many commissions and committees, and in the absence of any single centralised control, are not altogether rosy. The dangers have been described—sectarian and other internal feuds, the restive southerners, over-hasty Sudanisation. The chances of these being surmounted by goodwill and the exercise of common sense would be good if matters could be left to those who have worked together in amity for the last fifty years. Unfortunately those chances are reduced by the ineradicable tendency of Egypt to intrigue and mischief-making.

Once the goal of self-government is reached by the Sudanese, the scope for intrigue will be limited. In the meanwhile it is not. No sooner had the Agreement of 12 February been signed than Negib broadcast to the Sudanese that the great aim was 'to acquire our freedom and rid ourselves of the yoke of imperialism and slavery'. These were strange words from one of the heirs of the conquests and brutalities of the nineteenth century, and testify to his subservience to the more rabid elements in Egypt and a certain blindness to the reactions of the Sudanese. Moreover, throughout the elections money and propaganda were poured into the Sudan with flagrant disregard of pledges given to the contrary.* So long as the Anglo-Egyptian dispute about the Canal Zone remains unsettled the urge to stir up trouble for the British in the Sudan will continue, and the wider the breach between rival parties in the Sudan, the greater will be the chances of exploiting the difficulties of the administering power. Even when self-government becomes a reality and the scope and need for mischief are less, the desire to further the great objective—the control of the Nile—will remain, and

* See detailed statement by Mr. Eden in reply to a Parliamentary question on 13 November, 1953.

it is to be anticipated that responsible Sudanese may still have to face the corrupting effects upon the local electorate of Egyptian money working through venal ministers returned to power with its aid.*

It was remarked in an earlier chapter,† with reference to the great Egyptian irrigation works upon the Upper Nile, that Egypt's security for her water supplies will be reduced proportionately as the Sudanese gain strength and confidence, and as they themselves need more water from the river; but the converse does not apply, for if there is disorder in the Sudan, Egypt's security will be far less. It has never been, and never will be, so complete as during the period of British control. What, then, is the explanation of the apparently suicidal determination of Egypt, which has no power to coerce the Sudan, to get rid of every vestige of British control with such precipitancy? It would seem to lie in two factors—ignorance and malice.

Egyptian ignorance of the Sudan and the Sudanese has been general until very recent days. There have, of course, been individual exceptions. In the townships of the north, for instance, there has been some trading, and intermarriage —Negib's own parentage provides an example—hundreds of Egyptian clerks and accountants have worked in Government offices; Egyptian engineers and labourers have worked on the Upper Nile; some scores of Egyptian *mamurs* and *sub-mamurs* served the administration prior to 1924. But in all cases, except the last, familiarity with the cultivators and cattle-men of the hinterland has been extremely limited, each party being content to view the other from afar with a maximum of detachment. To the average Egyptian living in Egypt, the educated and the uneducated alike, the Sudan has always connoted a distant country with a dangerous climate and a population of savage habits. To the average Sudanese of the interior the name of Egypt is still associated with the venal and rapacious 'Turks', who afflicted their country for a period, were ejected by them, and returned in limited numbers and under a different ægis.

It is to the general ignorance of conditions in the Sudan that much of Egyptian mishandling of affairs has been due. They

* *Cf.* Article in *The Times* of 16 May, 1952, written before the signature of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement, but none the less applicable.

† See p. 148.

have never realised the strength of the resentment which the misgovernment of 1821–84 aroused, nor the folly of allowing their press, and the comic papers in particular, to picture various respected Sudanese leaders as half-naked, grinning savages. Still less have they appreciated the fact that Sudanese visiting Egypt have returned with impressions far from flattering and told tales of a seething and insanitary population of illiterates, of graft in high places, of a terrible disproportion between the ostentatious wealth of the few and the grinding poverty of the poor—of conditions, in brief, far different from their own. Their dictation of a constitution for the Sudan in 1951, denying its right to full self-government, showed a similar lack of imagination. It is clear that General Negib has realised the mistakes of the past, though he has not been above exploiting the ignorance behind them, but the damage has been done, and a generation of Sudanese has grown up disliking and despising the Egyptians. It is true that many of the urban Sudanese, whatever their private views, have been ready to make use of Egyptian support for their own purposes. Dissatisfied or nervous elements have collaborated with Egyptian anglers in muddy waters and accepted any material assistance that has been forthcoming, but they have done so without self-deception or illusion. Thus, the Unity Front has come into being; but it is not to be assumed that its members, once self-government is attained, with or without affiliation with Egypt, will be noticeably more complaisant towards Egyptian pretensions than their rivals. They will play the Egyptian game so long as Egypt plays their game, and, even so, only to the point at which their own interests and those of their country are in no serious jeopardy.

We come now to the second motive animating the Egyptians, the psychological: * That the Egyptians have been deeply distrustful of the British in respect to the Sudan for the last seventy years, and that this distrust has grown rather than diminished until it has become an obsession, is obvious and indisputable. Official documents, speeches, press articles and actions alike testify to the fact with one voice, the tones alone varying with the occasion from muttered grumbling to

* Three articles in R.I.I.A., *International Affairs*, January, April and July, 1953, will repay study in this connection. The first two are by Albert Hourani; the third is a reply by Brigadier S. Longrigg.

a crescendo of abuse. Before examining the causes of this distrust, one point must be emphasised: there is little public opinion, as we understand the term, in Egypt. The vast majority of the population is uneducated and uninterested in more than squeezing a livelihood out of the land which their fathers and forefathers have tilled for countless generations. What they are told they believe, and if it affects their prospects of getting water for their land and cash to buy their daily bread, they are easily roused to excited resentment. In the towns, where overcrowding and under-employment are rife, the word lies with the press and the *effendi*. The former, with few exceptions, is venal: each paper must buy the favour of its clientèle by outdoing its rivals in the pungency of its aspersions and the violence of its language; and, as a rule, whatever party is in power the politicians are prepared to give effective prompting to the journalists, and the journalists are ready to accept it, provided it does not unduly savour of moderation. The coffee-house is the meeting-place for all and sundry, and here the *effendi*, with his veneer of education and his flair for oratory, can always be assured of an attentive audience.

In other words, 'public opinion' in Egypt is too often the product, not of judgment based upon the weighing of pros and cons, much less of any critical study of facts, but a sentiment dictated or induced by interested parties. Hence, when we speak in terms of Egyptian distrust, it is the distrust felt by the governing circles and those immediately subject to their influence that is in issue. It is hardly necessary to add that, since party rivalries run high and bitter, political expediency demands that the attention of the electorate be caught and held by the reiteration of slogans the choice of which depends on the calculated strength of their appeal. Among these the subject of the Sudan ranks high for two reasons. The first is an obvious one. The water of the Nile is the life of Egypt. Without it the people perish. If the *fellah* can be persuaded that there is a threat to the water on which his whole existence depends, he will be roused to an extent that no other cry could approach in efficacy. The murders of British nationals which were perpetrated in Upper Egypt after the close of the First World War were the direct result of such propaganda, and the theme can be relied upon to keep its potency at all times.

In the second place there is a curious strain of imperialism and *braggadocio* transcending mere nationalism, which appeals to the *effendi* of the towns and many of the politicians, and which strongly affected palace circles until their liquidation by General Negib. This derives in part from pipe-dreams of ancient splendour, the sight of the Pyramids and the temples and tombs and riches of the Pharaohs, and is fortified by hazy memories of the conquests of Mohammed 'Ali and Ibrahim Pasha during the nineteenth century, the overrunning of Syria and Arabia, the seizure of Abyssinian ports and the penetration of Equatoria. National pride is stirred, and the day is seen when the glories of the past may be revived. The practical aspect of ways and means tends to be overlooked; so also is the fact that at the present day, when the surviving remnants of 'imperialism'—and even of 'colonialism'—are being condemned, any revival of either would meet with no support or approbation.

So much for the influence of public opinion in Egypt concerning the Sudan. Let us now, setting aside the imperialistic motive as having become of secondary importance, examine more closely the basis for the suspicions felt about the waters of the Nile. It is as true to-day as when the words were written by Lord Cromer in 1895 that 'if any civilised Power holds the waters of the Upper Nile it may in the end be in a position to exercise a predominating influence on the future of Egypt', and, moreover, as we have seen, Egypt has given hostages to fortune in the form of vast irrigation works, some completed and some in preparation, between Aswan and the Great Lakes. She has consistently feared that so long as we held authority in the Sudan we could from that vantage point control her fate even more effectively than we controlled it directly by our occupation of Egypt itself from 1882 onwards. The point which she has chosen to ignore is that our administration of the Sudan since 1898, so far from constituting a threat, has given her a security which would otherwise have been entirely lacking. What money she has spent there has been no more than a sound and inexpensive insurance policy. It might, indeed, have been understandable if Egypt had begged us to remain indefinitely in the Sudan in order to protect her interests and objected to any measure of self-government for the Sudan which might cause her risks. Instead, she has preferred to work by every kind of intrigue for our depar-

ture—and this from a time when no question of Sudanese self-government had arisen. The measure of her fears is thereby illustrated, but so also is the measure of her improvidence, and these can be explained only by the three concurrent factors: suspicion of our ultimate objective, 'immortal longings' for an enhanced status in the eyes of the world, and the ever-present need of the politician for popular support.

T. E. Lawrence has recorded * a conversation which he once held with a great Arabian prince:

> 'Feisul mused a little and said, "I am not a Hejazi by upbringing: and yet, by God, I am jealous for it. And though the British do not want it yet what can I say when they took the Sudan, also not wanting it? They hunger for desolate lands, to build them up; and so, perhaps, one day Arabia will seem to them precious".'

If Feisul, who was our friend and ally, could feel these doubts, how much more so are they natural to the more cynical Egyptian. Indeed, much of the earlier history of the British Empire lends colour to the theory that the twin motives of empire-building, both the acquisition of strategic bases and openings for trade and the 'hunger for desolate lands, to build them up', to put straight what is crooked and reduce chaos to order—have been apt in combination to work to our advantage at the expense of other Powers; but the Egyptians, while appreciating the former motive, have little understanding of anything that savours of altruism. They do not, in any case, seem to have realised, as Feisul in due course did, that times have changed in the last thirty years or so, and that the imperialism of the past, whatever its merits and justification—and they are far from negligible—is dead in the Western world, and has been replaced by the modern creed that condemns any form of aggression and holds that every people has a right to self-government as soon as they show fitness to exercise it—and usually before. This being so, the fears of Egypt are manifestly lacking in substance: it would have been impossible at any time in the present generation for us to think of annexing the Sudan in face of the disapprobation of the world, nor is there any reason to suppose that,

* *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, pp. 99–100.

if such a course had been practical, it would have commended itself to Government or people on grounds of material advantage. The sole beneficiary would have been Egypt.

Behind all this distrust and misapprehension, too, there lies another factor which is not easy to define: something not far short of 'envy, hatred and malice'—sentiments always latent in Egypt and periodically fanned into flame. The blame for this may lie in some slight degree with ourselves, in that the tact and courtesy which are so dear to the East, and which are so easily mistaken for obsequiousness, have not always been reciprocated by John Bull. Nor has the average Englishman fully realised the background of the dislike with which his country is viewed in Egypt and throughout the Middle East. It is not to be accounted for solely by irrational xenophobia or the invariable tendency of a ruling plutocracy to divert attention from its own shortcomings, and the crying need for social and economic reform, to extraneous factors. The years which followed the decay of the Turkish Caliphate saw a weakening of the old traditional bonds of religion, and this coincided with a fresh increase in the military and economic strength of the Western Powers, the spread of imperialist sentiment and competitive expansionism. The East, softened by decay, found itself at the mercy of the West, and though the better-educated classes were ready enough to adopt the appurtenances and trappings of an alien civilisation and share in the commercial prosperity it brought to them, they resented the concomitant subordination, and chose to regard it as nothing more than exploitation. What appeared to British or French, confident, in their superiority, as a process of splendid construction, seemed to its beneficiaries to mean the destruction—as indeed was often the case—of their ancient ways of life and their self-respect. They lost their confidence in themselves and developed an 'inferiority complex'. This again gave impetus to deeply implanted instincts of nationalism and pride in the memory of glories long past and dead. The growth of a rich mercantile class and of landlordism, together with the rapid increase of a population living at a bare subsistence level, further weakened the ancient structure before the new had had time to acquire solidity. Thus arose a relationship between East and West having no real community of aim, and often embittered by action, which, however necessary for the maintenance of law and order and

the protection of legitimate interests, served to remind those nominally at the helm that their power was exercised on sufferance. The tension, not unnaturally, became greater in proportion as the resources of the weaker partners developed, the 'educated' output of schools and colleges increased and experience was gained in the working of the new democracy. Personal ambitions became more keen as opportunities for their satisfaction increased, and any feelings of gratitude for benefits received were submerged in resentment for slights inflicted or imagined. The sense of humiliation blossomed into active detestation.

Above all, the Western Powers themselves were adopting new creeds under the influence of a doctrinaire liberalism which was becoming fashionable in England and found support in the ingrained American 'anti-colonialism'. To the East this merely connoted weakness, and indeed the interpretation was not without justification, for after the First World War there was a simultaneous decline not only in the desire to dominate others, but in the ability to do so. Treaties and agreements 'freely negotiated' replaced ultimata, 'self-government' and 'independence' became more than catchwords. But to the East there was still an element of Hobson's choice in these, and so long as its own strength was less than that of the West, assurances and pledges appeared to be illusory. Egypt's partnership in the League of Nations and, at a later stage, in the United Nations Organisation, added very materially to its sense of self-importance, and provided glorious opportunities, hitherto coveted but impossible to realise, of playing off one Western Power against another, of uniting for its own purposes with other *blocs* to put pressure upon those who were regarded as merely posing as friends. The succession of policies adopted by Great Britain in Palestine, which all had the common intention, shared by the United States, of taking the whole or a large part of that country out of the orbit of the Arab States and entrusting it to the Jews, exacerbated antagonism to fever point, and still keeps it there.

And yet, in spite of all, were it not that history shows gratitude to be the rarest of all manifestations among nations, one would feel wonder at the Egyptian attitude. The immense benefits conferred upon Egypt by the administrative genius of Lord Cromer and his successors, its redemption from chaos,

the safeguarding of its vital interests, its protection in time of war, count, it seems, for nothing. The return has been a malicious campaign of intrigue and abuse against its benefactors, coupled with blind folly in all that relates to the Sudan. When the day comes for the great choice by the Sudanese, independence or a nominal link with Egypt, sectarian jealousies may have died down if the *Umma* and the Socialist Republicans have played their cards with reasonable tact and if the former have convincingly disclaimed any intention of establishing a monarchy.* In that case the vote may be for independence unqualified. If they handle matters unwisely and if the vote goes against them, the danger of civil war is not remote, and that, or a breakdown of the administration, will spell disaster for Egypt as well as for the Sudan.

The best hope for the future of both countries lies in a general acceptance of independence, leaving the Sudanese parties free to debate at leisure in their own Parliament what should be their subsequent relationship with Great Britain and Egypt respectively. When once the Sudanese are independent they are obviously at full liberty to do exactly as they please,† and if they desire 'to link the Sudan with Egypt in any form', that is solely their own concern and that of Egypt. Negib's contention that an attempt to join the British Commonwealth would render the Agreement of February, 1953, null and void is no more than pabulum for the Egyptian mob. Whatever decision is taken, the sole essential is that it should include terms of amity, preferably in treaty form, with both Great Britain and with Egypt. For Egypt, with its utter dependence on the Nile, this is literally vital; for the Sudanese a continuance of the help we have afforded in the past and such guarantees as we might be willing to give for our own sake, for theirs and for that of the cause of stability in the Middle East, would not be negligible.

Egypt has been the bane of the Sudan for more than a century, and if she has not the wisdom to accept with a good grace whatever the Sudanese may offer, the risk she will run will be immeasurable—and it may not be confined for ever to the issue of the waters of the Nile.

* It has lately been announced that the *Umma* have decided to take their stand upon advocacy of 'a democratic republican régime' (*The Times*, 24 August, 1953).

† *Cf.* Mr. Eden in the House of Commons, 17 February, 1953 (*Hansard*, p. 1073) and *The Times*, 18 February.

Postscript

THE election results for the first Sudanese House of Representatives were known by the middle of December, 1953, and gave the Unity Front or National Unionist Party ('N.U.P.') fifty-one seats out of a total of ninety-seven. The *Umma* won only twenty-two; the remainder fell to the Southern Party (nine), non-party candidates (eleven), Socialist Republicans (three), and one left-wing Communist or 'anti-imperialist' (in the graduates' constituency).

In the elections to the Senate the N.U.P. won twenty-two seats out of thirty, the *Umma* three, the Southern Party three and non-party candidates two. The holders of the remaining twenty seats in the Senate, nominated by the Governor-General, with the approval of his Commission, will be N.U.P. ten, *Umma* four, Socialist Republicans one, non-party two, and Southerners three.

These results, and particularly those in the ninety-two territorial constituencies of the Lower House, present very interesting features. The *Umma* gained their successes in the old Mahdist strongholds, the Blue Nile and the western provinces; the N.U.P. swept the north, the east and the townships. In the south, non-party or 'Southern Party' candidates won sixteen out of twenty-two seats: the other six were won by the N.U.P. Thus, at the time of writing (December, 1953), the majority of the Southerners' representatives is uncommitted to support of either of the main groups, though the minority sextet, who appear to owe their success to the funds lavishly distributed through the Egyptian Irrigation Department at Malakal, will presumably carry out their obligations in Parliament.

At first sight it would seem that Egyptian propaganda has been highly successful; but if one point emerges more clearly than another from the elections it is that the true conflict, as has been stressed in earlier chapters, has not been between

devotion to Egypt on the one hand and independence on the other, but between anti-Mahdism and Mahdism, between the two great rivals, Sayed 'Ali el Mirghani and Sayed 'Abd el Rahman el Mahdi, or, it may even be said, between two brands of independence, the one qualified and the other unqualified. The Dervish background of the *Umma*, styling themselves 'The *Ansar*'—the historic title of the 'Helpers' of the Prophet Mohammed, now applied to those of the Mahdi, his *soi-disant* successor—has failed to appeal to the educated majority of the present generation. They have become somewhat nervous of the *Umma*'s extremist attitude and, partly by way of escapism maybe, have shown a preference for orthodoxy. An obvious illustration of the effect of personalities viewed against the historical background is provided by the case of the nomad Kababish in northern Kordofan, where the successful candidate stood as an N.U.P. candidate for the very simple reason that his grandfather was beheaded by the Mahdi in 1883.

Had the British and the Egyptians both remained entirely aloof from the scene, the electoral contest might have been a closer one. With the British observing a studious neutrality and the Egyptians pouring money into the country and dinning their propaganda by broadcast and in person throughout the towns and villages the balance was upset. Moreover, 'authority forgets a dying king', and since we have shown no resentment at the undermining of our old authority, but rather the intention of renouncing it and leaving those who were loyal to the established order—'the *hukuma*'—to fend for themselves, it has seemed the part of commonsense to most Sudanese holding moderate views and having no desire for violent controversy with their northern neighbour to favour a course of safety and seek the favour of the power which seems to be in the ascendant. Indeed, the vote given may be regarded on the whole as one for moderation. The skilful tactics of General Negib, his family affiliations with the Sudan, his spectacular overthrow of the monarchy, and his apparent ability to flout with impunity the once all-powerful British, have played their part in the denouement.

And yet the victory acclaimed by Egypt is likely to prove a hollow one. There is little love felt for her, and no intention appears on the part of any major group to accept dictation or

direction from her. Within a few days of the result of the poll being known the leading 'Unionists' were already making this clear in pronouncements condemning the Nile Waters Agreement of 1929 and outlining demands for their own brand of independence. Egyptians may have visions of an Egyptian Governor-General, of Egyptian troops quartered in the Sudan, of Egyptian control of the Sudan Defence Force, of Egyptian governors of provinces, but time alone will show which, if any, of these materialise.

The problem of the southern Sudan, too, stands unsolved, but the dangers inherent in it—the unruly character of the vast untutored population, entirely unaware of the political issues and caring nothing for the northern politicians or for Egypt—have been sufficiently stressed in Chapter 16 and need no repetition. So far as concerns the electoral results, the degree of cohesion shown is very noteworthy.

Parliament has not yet met and self-government does not operate until 'the appointed day', namely that on which the Governor-General certifies that the necessary institutions have been constituted, namely the Council of Ministers, the House of Representatives and the Senate. Of these the Council of Ministers must await the meeting of Parliament and the election of a Prime Minister, which may take place early in the New Year. No one can say to which of the main groups the floating vote will be given or what fissures will appear in the party platforms within the next few months. The bond which has held together the various groups of 'Unionists' on an Egyptian ticket has hitherto been their dislike of the Mahdists, but the degree of unity among them is much the same as that to be observed in the United Nations Organisation, and with the attainment of power and the growth of personal rivalries there will probably be a progressive weakening of its force. This may not lead to any corresponding strengthening of the *Umma*, unless the latter are shrewd enough to moderate their tone and clothe their demands for independence in more fashionable raiment, but the result may well be the emergence of entirely new parties with slogans still to be devised. It can only be said at this stage that the various parties favouring independence—*Umma*, Socialist Republicans, Southerners and others who are not too deeply committed to the Egyptian camp—are reported to be trying to form a joint front.

As things stand there seems to be insufficient justification for regarding the results of the Sudanese elections in itself as a catastrophe to Great Britain. The damage was done when, in January, 1952, the Sudanese parties made their unholy compact (p. 217 above) with the Egyptians, conceding the demand for the swift elimination of the British staff and the curtailment of the Governor-General's authority in return for a formal acknowledgment by Egypt of the Sudan's right of self-determination, and when Her Majesty's Government (which had already conceded that right in principle) endorsed the main provisions of the compact in the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 12 February, 1953.

There is no burking the fact that, with the N.U.P. in the ascendant, the pressure for the process of Sudanisation to be accelerated will be intensified, and to that extent the danger to the Sudan is increased, but, on the other hand, it is to be remembered that by the terms of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement both we and Egypt are equally pledged to complete the process of Sudanisation in not less than three years from 'the appointed day', and there is no reason to suppose either that any Sudanese party, having come into power, would forego that deceptive advantage, or that many of the British staff would themselves consent, in the circumstances of the day, to remain even if invited to do so.

So, too, with our own abnegation of responsibility, the other most grave danger, the difficulty of controlling the southern Sudan and of ensuring the supply and distribution of the waters of the Nile, remains constant, irrespective of the result of the elections. For the rest, it is obviously better for all concerned that relations between the Sudan and Egypt should be marked by some degree of amicability, offering opportunities for collaboration, than that from the very outset the two neighbours should be at violent loggerheads.

There has been a tendency in Parliament and press to treat the Sudan elections as being synonymous with the exercise of self-determination, the final choice. They are not so. The choice has still to be made at some time within the next three years, and the outcome remains unpredictable.

THE
ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN
Scale of Miles
100 50 0 100 200 300
Reference
Railways
International Boundary
Battle Site ⚔. Ancient Sites in Brackets
EGYPT
LIBYA
NORTHERN
FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA
BELGIAN CONGO
UGANDA PROTECTE
KENYA COLONY
ETHIOPIA
ERITREA
ARABIA
RED SEA
KASSALA
KORDOFAN
DARFUR
BAHR EL GHAZAL
UPPER NILE
EQUATORIA
KHARTOUM
BLUE NILE
WHITE NILE
NUBA MOUNTAINS
Toski
(Kasr Ibrim)
Wadi Halfa
Semna
Firket
Ginnis
Selima Oasis
Halaib
Jidda
Port Sudan
Abu Hamed
Suakin
Trinkitat
Sinkat
Tokar
Haiya Jun.
Karora
Kerma
Argo
Dongola
4th Cataract
Kirbekan
Merowe
(Napata)
El Khandaq
Kareima
Ed Debba
Korti
Berber
Atbara
Damer
(Zeidab)
Abu Tleih
Metemma
(Meroe)
Shendi
Goz Regeb
Massawa
Keren
Asmara
Bir Natrun
Darb el Arba'in
Wadi el Melik
Omdurman
Khartoum
(Soba)
Jebel Aulia
DAM
El Kamlin
Khashm el Girba
Kassala
Rufaa
BUTANA
Wad Medani
Nag Abdullah
Gedaref
(Axum)
Adua
J.MEIDOB
J.HARAZA
J.KAGA
Kutum
Abeché
Adrei
Geneina
Kebkabiya
El Fasher
J.MARRA
Zalingei
DAR TAMA
DAR GIMR
DAR MESALIT
DAR SULA
DARFUR
Nyala
Taweisha
El Odaiya
Dilling
Delami
Rashad
Abu Zabad
J.DAIER
Bara
El Obeid
En Nahud
Rahad
Kosti
Sing
Karkoj
El Jebelein
Dueim
El Kawa
Sennar
Gallabat
Gondar
R. Rahad
R. Dinder
Roseires
Renk
L. Tana
Dangila
Abu Gabra
Kadugli
Heiban
Talodi
Kaka
Kurmuk
Melut
BENI SHANGUL
Kodok (Fashoda)
Asosa
Malakal
Abwong
Machar Marsh
Nasir
Gambela
Gore
Addis Ababa
Daga River Post
Akobo Post
Pibor Post
Bor
Jonglei
Yirol
Rumbek
Shambe
Wau
Tonj
Meshra
Aweil
Raga
Kafia Kingi
Tambura
Yambio
Maridi
Amadi
Tombe
Lado
Juba
Mongalla
Rejaf
Gondokoro
Kapoeta
Nagishot
Torit
Ikoto
Kajo Kaji
Yei
Aba
Niangara
Nimule
Owen Falls Dam
L. Rudolf
L. Albert
Bolia Plateau
Maji
R. Oma
R. Akobo
R. Pibor
R. Sobat
R. Baro
R. Pongo
R. Lol
R. Jur
R. Yei
L. No
Bahr el Jebel
Bahr el Zeraf
Bahr el Arab
W. Azum
W. Howar
R. Setit
R. Atbara
R. Gash
R. Baraka
White Nile
Blue Nile
Abbe Is.
Tonga
Renk
Sing
Kosti
Rashad
Abu Zabad
Dilling
Delami
Heiban
Talodi
Kadugli
Abu Gabra
Nyala
Taweisha
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J.KAGA
J.DAIER
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El Obeid
Dueim
El Kawa
Sennar
Wad Medani
Rufaa
Khartoum
Omdurman
Jebel Aulia
El Kamlin
Khashm el Girba
Kassala
Gedaref
Gallabat
Gondar
Roseires
Renk
Kurmuk
Kodok (Fashoda)
Asosa
Malakal
Abwong
Nasir
Gambela
Gore
Akobo Post
Pibor Post
Bor
Jonglei
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Rumbek
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Tonj
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Mongalla
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Wau
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Kapoeta
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Niangara
Nimule
Owen Falls Dam
L. Rudolf
L. Albert
Bolia Plateau
Maji
R. Oma
R. Akobo
R. Pibor
R. Sobat
R. Baro
R. Pongo
R. Lol
R. Jur
R. Yei
L. No
Bahr el Jebel
Bahr el Zeraf
Bahr el Arab
W. Azum
W. Howar
R. Setit
R. Atbara
R. Gash
R. Baraka
White Nile
Blue Nile
Abbe Is.
24°
30°
36°
20°
16°
12°
8°
4°
A
B
C
D
1
2
3
4
5
6

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT CONCERNING SELF-GOVERNMENT AND SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE SUDAN

Cairo, 12th February, 1953

THE Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (hereinafter called the 'United Kingdom Government') and the Egyptian Government,

Firmly believing in the right of the Sudanese people to Self-Determination and the effective exercise thereof at the proper time and with the necessary safeguards,

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

In order to enable the Sudanese people to exercise Self-Determination in a free and neutral atmosphere, a transitional period providing full self-government for the Sudanese shall begin on the day specified in Article 9 below.

Article 2

The transitional period, being a preparation for the effective termination of the dual Administration, shall be considered as a liquidation of that Administration. During the transitional period the sovereignty of the Sudan shall be kept in reserve for the Sudanese until Self-Determination is achieved.

Article 3

The Governor-General shall, during the transitional period, be the supreme constitutional authority within the Sudan. He shall exercise his powers as set out in the Self-Government Statute with the aid of a five-member Commission, to be called the Governor-General's Commission, whose powers are laid down in the terms of reference in Annex I to the present Agreement.

Article 4

This Commission shall consist of two Sudanese proposed by the two contracting Governments in agreement, one Egyptian

citizen, one citizen of the United Kingdom and one Pakistani citizen, each to be proposed by his respective Government. The appointment of the two Sudanese members shall be subject to the subsequent approval of the Sudanese Parliament when it is elected, and the Parliament shall be entitled to nominate alternative candidates in case of disapproval. The Commission hereby set up will be formally appointed by Egyptian Government decree.

Article 5

The two contracting Governments agree that, it being a fundamental principle of their common policy to maintain the unity of the Sudan as a single territory, the special powers which are vested in the Governor-General by Article 100 of the Self-Government Statute shall not be exercised in any manner which is in conflict with that policy.

Article 6

The Governor-General shall remain directly responsible to the two contracting Governments as regards:

(*a*) external affairs;

(*b*) any change requested by the Sudanese Parliament under Article 101 (1) of the Statute for Self-Government as regards any part of the Statute;

(*c*) any resolution passed by the Commission which he regards as inconsistent with his responsibilities. In this case he will inform the two contracting Governments, each of which must give an answer within one month of the date of formal notice. The Commission's resolutions shall stand unless the two Governments agree to the contrary.

Article 7

There shall be constituted a Mixed Electoral Commission of seven members. These shall be three Sudanese appointed by the Governor-General with the approval of his Commission, one Egyptian citizen, one citizen of the United Kingdom, one citizen of the United States of America, and one Indian citizen. The non-Sudanese members shall be nominated by their respective Governments. The Indian member shall be Chairman of the Commission. The Commission shall be appointed by the Governor-General on the instructions of the two contracting Governments. The terms of reference of this Commission are contained in Annex II to this Agreement.

Article 8

To provide the free and neutral atmosphere requisite for Self-Determination there shall be established a Sudanisation Committee consisting of:

(*a*) an Egyptian citizen and a citizen of the United Kingdom to be nominated by their respective Governments and subsequently appointed by the Governor-General, together with three Sudanese members to be selected from a list of five names submitted to him by the Prime Minister of the Sudan. The selection and appointment of these Sudanese members shall have the prior approval of the Governor-General's Commission;

(*b*) one or more members of the Sudan Public Service Commission who will act in a purely advisory capacity without the right to vote;

(*c*) the function and terms of reference of this Committee are contained in Annex III to this Agreement.

Article 9

The transitional period shall begin on the day designated as 'the appointed day' in Article 2 of the Self-Government Statute. Subject to the completion of the Sudanisation as outlined in Annex III to this Agreement, the two contracting Governments undertake to bring the transitional period to an end as soon as possible. In any case this period shall not exceed three years. It shall be brought to an end in the following manner. The Sudanese Parliament shall pass a resolution expressing their desire that arrangements for Self-Determination shall be put in motion and the Governor-General shall notify the two contracting Governments of this resolution.

Article 10

When the two contracting Governments have been formally notified of this resolution, the Sudanese Government, then existing, shall draw up a draft law for the election of the Constituent Assembly which it shall submit to Parliament for approval. The Governor-General shall give his consent to the law with the agreement of his Commission. Detailed preparations for the process of Self-Determination, including safeguards assuring the impartiality of the elections and any other arrangements designed to secure a free and neutral atmosphere, shall be subject to international supervision. The

two contracting Governments will accept the recommendations of any international body which may be set up to this end.

Article 11

Egyptian and British military forces shall withdraw from the Sudan immediately upon the Sudanese Parliament adopting a resolution expressing its desire that arrangements for Self-Determination be put in motion. The two contracting Governments undertake to complete the withdrawal of their forces from the Sudan within a period not exceeding three months.

Article 12

The Constituent Assembly shall have two duties to discharge. The first will be to decide the future of the Sudan as one integral whole. The second will be to draw up a constitution for the Sudan compatible with the decision which shall have been taken in this respect, as well as an electoral law for a permanent Sudanese Parliament. The future of the Sudan shall be decided either :

(*a*) by the Constituent Assembly choosing to link the Sudan with Egypt in any form, or

(*b*) by the Constituent Assembly choosing complete independence.

Article 13

The two contracting Governments undertake to respect the decision of the Constituent Assembly concerning the future status of the Sudan and each Government will take all the measures which may be necessary to give effect to its decision.

Article 14

The two contracting Governments agree that the draft Self-Government Statute shall be amended in accordance with Annex IV to this Agreement.

Article 15

This Agreement and its attachments shall come into force upon signature.

(*Here follow the signatures.*)

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